

December, 1910.

FINE PHOTOCRAVURE PRESENTED GRATIS.

Price 1/-

THE

THE QUIVER

CHRISTMAS
NUMBER-1910



BEECHAM'S PILLS

SUCH HEALTH DID GIVE HER.



FREE.

We have told you already how Mellin's Food is starch free, how it nourishes a baby from birth, how, when mixed with fresh milk, it is an exact substitute for mother's milk. Free sample on receipt of 2d. for postage. Apply, Sample Department, Mellin's Food, Limited, Peckham.

Mellin's Food



Quite a Good Thing For the Table
ASK FOR IT.

HONEYCOMB MOULD



Every Cook and Housekeeper ought to bear in mind **Honeycomb Mould**. Jelly, Tapioca, Creamy Custard, etc., are easily prepared in one operation. Rich as a cream and a sixth the cost.

3d. Packet makes 1½ Pints.

Here's Another Good Thing—“**SUNSHINE**”



The First and Most Economic

CUSTARD POWDER

6d. Tin makes 24 Pints.

CLARK & CO.

Send your Dress or Suit to **CLARK & CO.**
THE CLEANERS
to be dry cleaned & made like new!
FIXED CHARGE 4!
Postage paid one way

SEND FOR PRICE LIST 34 HALLCROFT ROAD RETFORD BEST WORK LOW CHARGES

Q.—Dec. 1910.]

By means of

Mellin's Food

the difficulty which infants generally find in digesting cow's milk alone is entirely overcome.

“**THE CARE OF INFANTS**,” a work of 96 pages, dealing with the feeding and rearing of infants from birth, will be sent free on receipt of 3d. for postage.

“**HINTS ON WEANING**,” a work of 64 pages, treating of the care of infants during and after weaning, with recipes for simple diets, will be sent, post free, to those who have charge of young infants, on application to **MELLIN'S FOOD WORKS, PECKHAM, LONDON, S.E.**

Awarded the Highest Prize, “**THE GRAND PRIX**,” at Brussels Exhibition, 1910.

HORROCKSES'
LONGCLOTHS,
NAINSOOKS,
CAMBRICS,
MADAPOLAMS, etc.

SEE HORROCKSES' NAME ON SELVEDGE.

SHEETINGS,
Ready-Made
(PLAIN AND
HEMSTITCHED) **Sheets.**

SEE HORROCKSES' NAME ON EACH SHEET.

FLANNELETTES
of the Highest Quality.

SEE HORROCKSES' NAME ON SELVEDGE.

SOLD BY DRAPERS EVERYWHERE.



Patterns of the latest new Art Shades free on application to Paton's, Alloa, Scotland, or 192, Aldersgate Street, E.C.

BEWARE OF INFERIOR IMITATIONS!
See Registered TRADE MARK—

"Baby's Clothes will now fit Dolly."

Unless the Doll you buy bears this Trade Mark, you are being put off with a substitute for the

LIFE-SIZE DOLL

we introduced, and have sold for ten years.

We are now selling these Dolls, &c., all the year round at the following prices Post Paid:

No. 1 Model Life-size Doll, 30in. 1/-
No. 2 Model Life-size Doll, 30in. 1/-
No. 3 Model Life-size Doll, 30in. 2/-
20 inch Teddy Bear 6d.
20 Inch Doll 6d.

Life-size Duck ... 6d.
Life-size Cat ... 6d.
Life-size Dog ... 6d.

The Dolls are made in the old-fashioned Rag Dolls that Grandma used to make, and would make Grandma open her eyes in wonder. They are an "old fashioned" look, fast colours, of a hand painted French creation, printed on extra heavy cloth that will not tear. The stitching is perfect. The Dolls are intended to be stuffed. Dolly is printed with fair hair, rosy cheeks, brown eyes, kid-coloured body, red stockings, black shoes, and will stand alone. If Mamma can give out of Baby's outfit grown dresses that her little daughter can put on and off, button and buttonhole, as a child's desire, the Life-size Doll will live in that child's memory long after childhood. Time have passed.

Orders for the Colours, 6d. each. Money returned if not satisfied with any goods bearing our "Trade Mark." Write your full name and address, and keep No. of P.O. until you receive the goods.

SHY-NALL CHEMICAL CO. (Dept. 60.M.)
78, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C.



**Let 'em Make Their Own Father X'mas
IN...
HARBUTT'S PLASTICINE**

If they fail to get a good Portrait, they'll get plenty of amusement.

The Complete Modeller Box, with 5 Colours, Tools, &c., post free, 2/10. List and Catalogue of all our Boxes sent post free.

WM. HARBUTT, A.R.C.A., 27, Bathampton, BATH.

THE SCOTTISH WIDOWS' FUND



ESTABLISHED
1815

Assets
£20,000,000

The Largest British Mutual Office

Transacts all Classes of Life Assurance and Annuity Business

PROSPECTUS, LADIES' PROSPECTUS, AND QUOTATIONS SENT ON APPLICATION

EDINBURGH: 9 ST. ANDREW SQUARE

LONDON: 28 CORNHILL, E.C., & 5 WATERLOO PLACE, S.W.

Agencies in all the Principal Towns in the United Kingdom.

THERMOS FLASKS

Hot Liquids or Cold at Will!

The THERMOS FLASK keeps hot liquids piping hot for 24 hours, and needs neither chemicals, methylated spirit, added heat or attention.

FOR

SHAVING, MOTORING, TRAVELLING.

Try the comfort of hot water, or a hot drink, ready at any moment, and always at hand.

Of all Jewellers, Chemists, Ironmongers and Stores.
None genuine without the word "THERMOS."

Prices from 6/6 to 11 guineas.

Wholesale only: A. E. GUTMANN & Co.,
8, Long Lane, London, E.C.

1st Thermos.
"Please! I've been boiling for a day and a night."



2nd Thermos.
"You needn't complain, I've been frozen for four days."

A FREE GIFT TO EVERY MAN AND WOMAN IN THE COUNTRY

ACCEPTABLE TO EVERYONE WHOSE SENSE OF REFINEMENT SUGGESTS A PROPER CARE OF THE PERSONAL APPEARANCE

THE POST OFFICE WILL UNDERTAKE THE DISTRIBUTION

Never in British history have the men and women who people these sea-girt isles paid such intense attention to questions of personal appearance as they undoubtedly do to-day.

Everyone wants to look smart—and young.

Everyone likes to look always at his or at her best.

And to look at your best nowadays means to look young and attractive-looking.

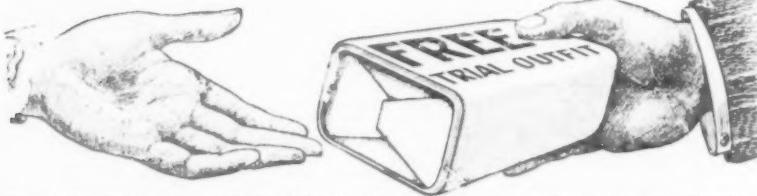
If, for instance, you belong to what the great Lord Beaconsfield once called "the fairer, but not the weaker, sex," then you want your hair "to look nice."

That is to say—

It must be luxuriant (for thin and scanty hair is an abomination).

It must be fine and silken in texture (hard and coarse hair may be all right for horses or for stuffing sofas, but it is most unattractive on a woman's head).

It must possess that soft, shimmering lustre and delightful gloss which everyone admires, and without which hair, however thick and long, looks dead, dull-looking, and not at all beautiful.



Everyone who has given a seven days' fair trial to Mr. Edwards' "Royal Secret" of hair beauty is simply astounded with the improvement it brings about in the growth and appearance of the hair. No part of the body grows so quickly under proper conditions as the hair, and that is why it is that a seven days' trial of the Free Harlene "Hair-Drill" Outfit is sufficient to demonstrate to everyone how worthy of inclusion in the toilet is "Hair-Drill." Mr. Edwards is asking nothing less of his Harlene "Hair-Drill" Outfits free of charge, and anyone who sends for one will receive it without cost.

And, almost beyond everything else, woman's hair must retain its colour in full and rich perfection.

For nothing so gives the appearance of advancing years to a woman than the possession of hair that has become grey or white in places.

THE "HARLENE" HAIR-DRILL."

If any man knows what the hair requires in order to keep at its very best, that man is the world-famous toilet specialist and Royal Hair Authority, Mr. Edwards, discoverer of "Harlene-for-the-Hair" and founder of the great "Hair-Cultural system."

And Mr. Edwards is willing to impart that knowledge of his (gained during the experience of a lifetime) to any man or woman who desires to possess and make use of it.

Fill up the coupon given at the foot of this article and send it to Mr. Edwards.

In return he will send you free of cost everything required for curing any of these conditions.

All you have to do is just to write.

In return you receive the Free Outfit for Seven Days' Hair Culture according to Mr. Edwards' "Hair-Drill" rules.

This outfit contains:—

1. A full bottle of that splendid Hair Dressing and grower, "Harlene-for-the-Hair," which should be used (following the directions sent with each Outfit) for about two minutes every day.

2. A trial package of the well-known home shampoo powder for the head, "Cremex," warranted to remove all deposits of seurf and dandruff, to render the scalp clean, cool, and healthy, and to stimulate the growth of the hair from the roots.

3. Complete rules and secret directions (enclosed in a valuable book on Hair-Culture) of the famous Hair-Culture practice, "Hair-Drill," with opinions on the same from some of the most beautiful women of the present day.

FILL UP THIS COUPON.

At any rate, if you want to possess or retain a luxuriant and attractive-looking head of hair yourself, just fill up the coupon below.

Fill it up, enclose 3d. in stamps to cover the postage to your address, and by return of post the whole outfit, containing everything you want for your hair, will be sent you free.

Let your hair be luxuriant and attractive-looking.



It will make ever so much difference to your appearance.

You can do so now free of cost.

Further supplies of the requirements for Hair Culture can be obtained from every leading chemist, druggist, or stores in the United Kingdom or (by sending postal order for amount) from the Harlene Co., 95 and 96, High Holborn, London, W.C., at the following prices:—

"Harlene for the Hair" in 1s., 2s. 6d., and 4s. 6d. bottles; "Cremex" Shampoo Powders for the scalp in tins, boxes, containing six shampoos.

FREE COUPON.

THE EDWARDS' HARLENE CO.,
95 and 96, High Holborn, London, W.C.

Dear Sir.—Please send me, free of charge, a complete Outfit for growing luxuriant and attractive hair.

I enclose 3d. to cover the postage to my address, to any part of the world.

Name _____

Address _____

THE QUIVER, December, 1913.

All that
Pens
should
be

Give

"SWANS"

this Xmas

A "Swan" possesses just those attractive qualities of convenience, usefulness, and beauty which have made it the most popular of all gifts. It makes writing a pleasure, and soon becomes a necessity of daily life. Think of each friend individually, and ask yourself if a "Swan" would not be "just the thing."



**Handsome,
Helpful,
Serviceable,
Lasting**

£20 down to 10/6

Made in solid gold, mounted with gems, plain gold, rolled gold, silver, vulcanite with gold bands, or simply plain vulcanite. Designs by the dozen to select from. However, every "Swan" is of the "Swan" standard quality and

Every "SWAN" is Guaranteed.

**SOLD BY ALL HIGH-CLASS
STATIONERS & JEWELLERS**

**Before buying any gift write for a "Swan"
Xmas Catalogue, sent post free.**

**MABIE, TODD & CO.,
79 and 80, High Holborn, London, W.C.**

Branches: 103, Cheapside, E.C. 2; 92a, Regent Street, W.1; 3, Exchange Street, Manchester; 14, Rue Neuve, Brussels; Brentano's, 7, Ave. de l'Opéra, Paris; and at New York and Chicago.

All
that
Gifts
should be

FREE

THIS NEW STYLE PNEUMATIC
HAIR-HEALTH BRUSH

£6,500 Worth of these Tatcho Brushes—the
King Edward Model To Be Given Away.

THE MOST VALUABLE FREE GIFT EVER OFFERED.

Will last you for years and be prized by you daily.

The new Tatcho Hair-Health Brush is a duplicate of the model of a set supplied for the use of His Majesty the late King Edward.

Although of so unique a character, these Hair Brushes—£6,500 worth—are to be absolutely given away to users of Mr. Geo. R. Sims' wonderful discovery, Tatcho, the genuine, good, true Hair-Grower.

Every reader of this announcement may have one for the use of himself or herself.

Imagine a hair brush in which the bristles are separately set in a beautifully yielding pneumatic pad.

**The King Edward
Model Tatcho
Hair Brush.**

Stretch the imagination a little further, and see with your mind's eye how bristles so deftly set and so singularly positioned must—they cannot do otherwise—penetrate through the thickest hair, and so sweep the scalp clean from all scurf and dandruff, dirt and dust.

Then again, imagine how easy it is to keep this brush sweetly clean. Its possessor has only to draw the separately-set bristles across the hand or a towel to immediately free every bristle hygienically from hair, scurf, and dust.

And this magnificent "King Edward" model Hair Brush is simply waiting your invitation to enter your service free of all cost to yourself. It need not be denied that the reader's regular use of this brush is intended to aid the good work that Tatcho does for every reader's hair.

Indeed, the new Pneumatic Pad and Separate-Bristle Tatcho Hair-Health Brush is plainly intended to aid and supplement Tatcho in its accredited work of cultivating and preserving the hair of the user. It will simply make assurance doubly sure.

No reasoning reader will fail to see and understand that a scalp free from scurf and dust makes it easier for the hair to live and grow in all its natural profusion and beauty.

And the only condition which you, dear reader, have to put into operation to secure for yourself one of these splendid new-style Hair-Health Brushes is to equip yourself with the other necessary working partner for your success in hair-growing—that is, a 2/9 bottle of Tatcho. An additional 4d. should also be sent to cover postage of the package to your address.

Readers should apply to the Chief Chemist, the Geo. R. Sims Hair Restorer Co., 5, Great Queen Street, Kingsway, London.

**Order this
beautiful Brush
To-day.**

Owing, unfortunately, to tariff and other obstacles, this opportunity is at the moment available only to residents of the British Isles who first apply.

Immediate application should be made for the two greatest aids to hair-health in the world, namely, Tatcho and the new Tatcho Hair-Health Brush.

Further supplies of Tatcho may be had from chemists and stores everywhere, 1/-, 2/9, and 4/6.

The present offer is available to December 31 next, after which date it will become void.



FREE BRUSH COUPON.

One brush only will be supplied to each user.

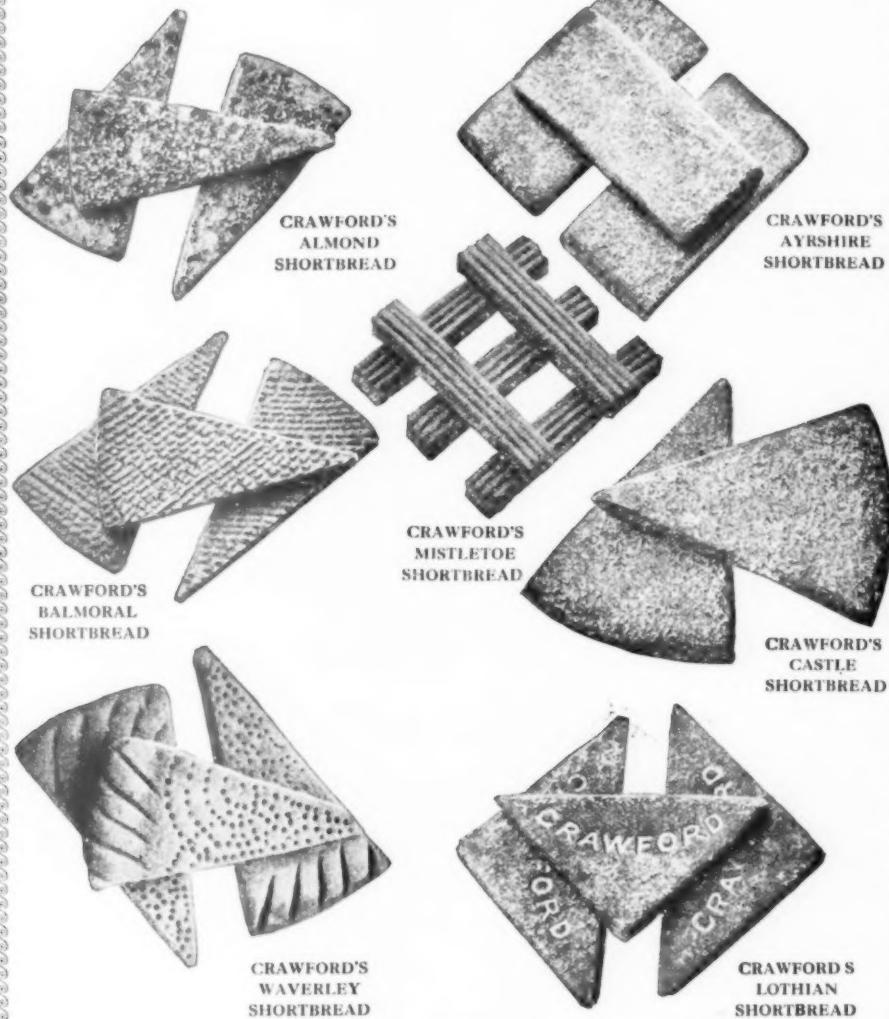
THIS COUPON entitles the holder who desires to benefit by Mr. Geo. R. Sims' discovery of Tatcho (the true Hair-Grower) to One Patent Hair-Health Brush FREE OF ALL CHARGE, in terms of the special announcement set forth in the December issue of THE QUIVER.

*Geo. R. Sims
Hair Restorer Co.*

XMAS DAINTIES



CRAWFORD'S SHORTBREAD



WILLIAM CRAWFORD & SONS, Ltd., Edinburgh, Liverpool, London.

MAY BE OBTAINED LOOSE BY THE POUND AND IN SPECIAL TINS FROM YOUR OWN GROCER OR BAKER

JEWEL

THE 'JEWEL' PEN IS DIFFERENT
to other Fountain Pens in this respect,
that whilst it will do the work that is
claimed for high-priced pens, and do
it well, it costs only 5/-
DON'T FORGET A CROWN 'JEWEL'
On all Stationers or post free from
sole makers:

JEWEL PEN CO. (Dept. 102),
102, Fenchurch Street, London, E.C.

5/-

Which?

Will you have a
NASTY HEADACHE
or a
Dr. MACKENZIE'S SMELLING BOTTLE?

Which cures HEADACHE, COLD IN THE HEAD, CATARRH, DIZZINESS, and FAINTNESS.
OF ALL CHEMISTS, price ONE SHILLING, or direct, 12 stamps in the United Kingdom.
TUNBRIDGE & WRIGHT, READING.



Yes. There are special merits in CARNA DENTIFRICE SALTS that others do not possess.

They cleanse the mouth to a degree rarely equalled by any other means.

They harden the gums and give them a healthy feeling and appearance.

They preserve the teeth and arrest decay. Have you a decayed tooth? Use CARNA DENTIFRICE SALTS and the decay will go no further.

They impart a pearly whiteness to the teeth which is much to be admired.

They give that cleanly and refreshing feeling to the mouth which is enjoyable.

After using them one gets the true flavour of the food one eats.

No waste in use. Just try them.
SIXPENCE A BOX.

Of all Chemists, or post free,
CARNA MANUFACTURING CO., Ltd.,
110, Strand, LONDON, W.C.

W. HARBROW, Iron Building Works,
S. BERMONDSEY STATION, S.E.

Telegrams—“Economical, London.”

Telephone Hop 17.



DESIGN 139A. Containing Drawing Room, Dining Room, Three Bedrooms, Kitchen and usual offices. Constructed of timber framing. Roof asbestos diagonal tiling. Plastered walls.

PRICE - - - - £280.0.0. including foundations, chimneies, and fittings complete.

100-PAGE CATALOGUE OF CHURCHES, CHAPELS, MISSION HALLS, BUNGALOWS, COTTAGES, BILLIARD ROOMS, STORES, CLUB ROOMS, FARM BUILDINGS, SHEDS, GYMNASIUMS, AEROPLANE & MOTOR GARAGES, &c., POST FREE ON MENTIONING THIS PAPER. SPECIAL EXPORT CATALOGUE. MANUFACTURER OF EVERY DESCRIPTION OF CHURCH FURNITURE AND JOINERY. BUILDINGS SHIPPED AND ERECTED IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD.

Six-roomed Bungalow complete, at Llanrwst, for sale. £150. Particulars on application.

Ah!—it's about BENGERS.



A FOOD OF GREAT NUTRITIVE VALUE.

The special feature of Benger's Food is that it can be prepared to suit any degree of digestive power. It is also very easily assimilated. Therefore when the digestive system is weakened through accident, pain, or illness, and whenever a light sustaining diet has become a necessity, **Benger's has no equal.**

The **Lancet** describes it as "Mr. Benger's admirable preparation."

The **Lancet** also says, "So many worthless articles of this kind have been sold that great care is required in choosing those upon which reliance can be placed." Mr. Benger's care has, therefore, been well spent.

The **British Medical Journal** says, "Benger's Food has by its excellence, established a reputation of its own." Time and use have justified the claims put forward for these preparations. In nothing is a high degree of pharmaceutical skill and special accuracy more needed than in the preparation of these peptonised Foods."

The **Medical Press and Circular** says: "Few modern improvements in ph. macy have done so much as Benger's Preparations to assist the Physician in his treatment of the sick."

The **Practitioner** says, "All these preparations are, we think, deserving of highest praise."

BENGERS FOR INFANTS, INVALIDS AND THE AGED.

Those interested in the care of Infants or Invalids, young or old, can obtain a 48-page booklet, "Benger's Food and How to Use It," which contains a "Concise Guide to the Rearing of Infants," and practical information on care of Invalids, etc., on application to

BENGERS FOOD, LTD., Otter Works, MANCHESTER.

820



Fry's

When the outlook's cold
and drear—
FRY'S PURE COCOA
brings good cheer!

PURE

Cocoa.

"PERFECT IN FLAVOUR."

THE DANGER OF NEGLECTED ILL-HEALTH

Mr. SANDOW'S IMPORTANT OFFER.

MUCH that has proved of the greatest value to the public from the health point of view has been published in connection with Mr. Eugen Sandow and the work of his Institute for the cure of illness without medicine, and the health message which is conveyed

on this page to-day deals with one of the most important health questions in relation to individual sufferers—*i.e.*, the peril of procrastination.



A week's health chart of the average man or woman who does not enjoy perfect health on any day during the week. The health line of a person perfectly well should run in a straight line in the top section, a condition which can be secured by taking the Sandow treatment.

The most dangerous thing any man or woman can do is to neglect even the slightest symptom of ill-health, treating it as a matter which if left will cure itself and pass away. It is by this negligence that chronic illness is deliberately invited, and the seeds of incurable disease are sown. No symptom of indisposition is too trifling to merit immediate attention.

Whilst the Sandow treatment is in no sense a cure-all, there is no doubt that in particular it will be found a great boon to all those who suffer from complaints which are nowadays so difficult to avoid and yet so hard to cure when once contracted.

Weak hearts, weak backs, curved spines, obesity, uric acid complications, indigestion, constipation, nervous disorders, weak chests, and other physical deficiencies, indeed, too many illnesses to name here, can be remedied by scientific exercises.

Although you are ill and ailing now you can be made as strong and vigorous as the healthiest man or woman alive. What has been done for others in the restoration of health can be done for you. Upon this point you have this to carry conviction. The Sandow System of Scientific Exercise cures 94 in every 100 cases treated, and gives substantial relief in 99 in every 100 cases.

Surely the treatment which records so high a percentage of successful results is worthy of investigation by every man or woman in ill-health, particularly as there is no charge for making inquiry, and because the cost of the treatment is so moderate as to be within the means of all. A full explanation of the application of Scientific Exercise to the various forms of illnesses in

which it has proved so highly beneficial is given in the health books referred to below, and it is made clear how and why the treatment can, with the greatest benefit, be taken by sufferers of all ages and either sex at small cost in their own homes.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

All whose health leaves room for improvement are invited to call and talk their case over, or write, mentioning THE QUIVER, to Mr. Sandow, at his Institute, 32, St. James's Street, Piccadilly, London, S.W., asking for a gratis copy of the book in his illustrated Health Library, the titles of which are:—

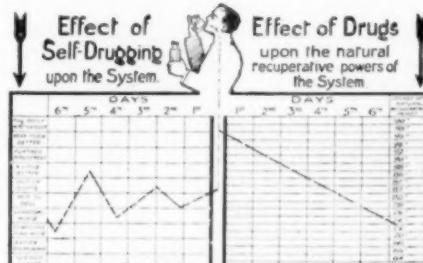
1. Indigestion and Dyspepsia.
2. Constipation and its Cure.
3. Liver Troubles.
4. Nervous Disorders in Men.
5. Nervous Disorders in Women.
6. Obesity in Men.
7. Obesity in Women.
8. Heart Affections.
9. Lung and Chest Complaints.
10. Rheumatism and Gout.
11. Anæmia: Its Cause and Cure.
12. Kidney Disorders: Functional and Chronic.
13. Lack of Vigour.
14. Physical Deformities in Men.
15. Physical Deformities in Women.
16. Functional Defects in Speech.
17. Circulatory Disorders.
18. Skin Disorders.
19. Physiological Development for Men.
20. Everyday Health.
21. Boys' and Girls' Health and Ailments.
22. Figure Culture for Women.
23. Insomnia.
24. Neuroasthenia.



THE ROAD TO NERVOUS COLLAPSE.

The different effects of neglected nervous disorders in either man or woman, depicted stage by stage, until the final result is reached. Any of the volumes mentioned on this page which deal with nervous disorders will show how they may be prevented and cured by Sandow's Scientific Exercise.

Those who also send particulars of age, occupation, illness from which relief is required, &c., will receive a personal opinion upon the suitability of their cases for treatment by this method.



INJUDICIOUS SELF-DRUGGING AND ITS EFFECTS.
The dual effect of wrongly self-prescribed medicine is apparent here. The left-hand section shows the fluctuation of the symptoms, while the right-hand section shows how every day of self-prescribed drugging lowers the natural recuperative powers inherent in mankind. How this may be avoided by taking the natural drugless treatment is explained in the books referred to on this page.

WRITE TO-DAY FOR ONE OF THE ABOVE HEALTH BOOKS—IT COSTS YOU NOTHING IF YOU MENTION "THE QUIVER."

Three well-known firms
express satisfaction with

De Dion Bouton

cars for commercial purposes

Messrs. W. & A. Gilbey, Ltd.,

Wine and Spirit Merchants.

Referring to a 6 h.p. car bought in 1903.

"We have found the car in every way satisfactory. It is a decidedly great advantage to us for sending our traveller about the city, and the cost of upkeep is comparatively small."

Messrs. Carl Hentschel, Ltd.,

Block Makers and Colour Printers.

Referring to a 9 h.p. car bought in 1906.

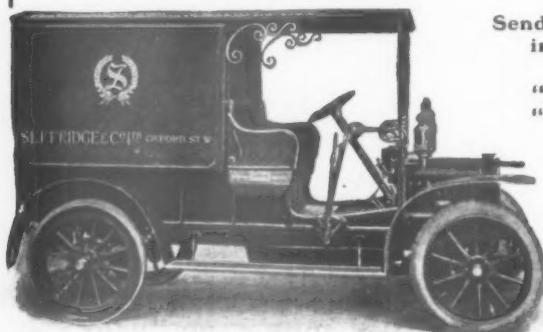
"The first van has been running on regular daily deliveries practically for the whole of these five years, and has covered upwards of 100,000 miles on the original gears. This speaks very well for the quality of the materials."

Messrs. Selfridge & Co., Ltd.,

General Drapers, etc.

Referring to a 10 h.p. car bought in 1909.

"The car we had from you in June, 1909, has done all that you said it would; it has not given us any trouble, but has helped us to extend our deliveries much beyond the distance possible for a horse to cover without change and consequent delay."



Send to-day for copies of the following interesting booklets, gratis and post free:

"Commercial Travellers' Motor Car."
"Cost of Motoring."

**De Dion Bouton (1907),
Ltd.,**

90, Great Marlborough Street,
London, W.

Telephones—City 3151.
Telegrams—"Andesite, London."

GAMAGES GREAT ANNUAL XMAS BAZAAR.

ALL PREVIOUS EFFORTS ECLIPSED. Greatly increased Floor Space.
12 acres of Amusements. Entertainments all day long. Wonderful
Working Pieces. Instructive and Amusing Demonstrations.

Great Attraction—MODEL TOWN.

Showing Railway Systems in Full Working, Miniature
Garrison, Fortresses, Playing Fountains, Boy Scouts'
Camp, etc. etc.

BIG DISPLAY OF Model Aeroplanes.

ELECTRIC RAILWAYS. Hundreds of working
models. TOYS in endless profusion.

GREAT Oriental Bazaar and Eastern Fair.

THOUSANDS OF PRESENTS FOR OLD AND YOUNG
ATTRACTIVELY DISPLAYED.

Nothing in London to Equal It.
COME YOURSELVES AND BRING THE CHILDREN.

PETS in Great Variety in our
Zoological Department.

RESTAURANT, TEA ROOMS,
AMERICAN SODA FOUNTAIN.

BIG BAZAAR BOOK

GRATIS AND POST FREE.

PRESENTS FOR ALL
AT POPULAR PRICES.

A. W. GAMAGE

LTD.,

HOLBORN,
LONDON, E.C.



TO SUFFERERS FROM SKIN AND BLOOD DISEASES

The Specialists will tell you that all such complaints as

Eczema, Scrofula, Bad Legs, Ulcers, Abscesses, Tumours, Glandular Swellings, Boils, Pimples, Sores and Eruptions of all Kinds, Piles, Blood Poison, Rheumatism, Gout, &c., are entirely due to a diseased state of the blood, and can only be permanently cured by thoroughly purifying the blood. For cleansing the blood of all impurities, from whatever cause arising, there is no other medicine just as good as "Clarke's Blood Mixture"; that's why in thousands of cases it has effected truly remarkable cures where all other treatments have failed.

Clarke's Blood Mixture has over 50 years' reputation, and the proprietors solicit sufferers to give it a trial to test its value.

Here is a good proof of its efficacy:

ECZEMA CURED.

"For six months I was suffering with eczema, and my arms and face were a mass of sores. I went to three doctors, but they did me no good. I then tried 'Clarke's Blood Mixture,' and seven bottles quite cured me.—(Signed) Miss BEATRICE DAVEY, Bishops Town, Lupitt, near Honiton, Devon."

BAD LEGS CURED.

"Dear Sirs,—For about two years I had a bad leg, and tried several medicines, but they did me no good; then I tried Clarke's Blood Mixture, and by the time I had taken three small bottles and one large one my leg was quite cured. —(Signed) Miss E. LUCK, Thorpe-by-Water, near Uppingham, Rutland."

"Clarke's Blood Mixture is entirely free from any poison or metallic impregnation, does not contain any injurious ingredient, and is a good, safe, and useful medicine."

HEALTH.

Of all Chemists and Stoves, 2/- per bottle, and in cases containing six times the quantity, 11/-, or post free on receipt of price direct from the Proprietors, the Lincoln and Midland Counties Drug Co., Lincoln.

**REFUSE
SUBSTITUTES**

**Clarke's
Blood
Mixture**

**HAS CURED THOUSANDS
WILL CURE YOU**

Now is the Time to Cure Catarrh & Nose-Breathing Difficulties.

Send (or call) for this Helpful Gift Book by Patient and Doctor who Jointly Discovered the Rhycol Self-Cure which Reopens Nasal Air Passages and Quickly Banishes Catarrh.

NO OPERATIONS—NO CAUTERISING—NO SPRAYS—CURES AUTOMATICALLY DURING SLEEP.

It is the hearty desire of the discoverers of the new cure that all who suffer from the above complaints should write or call for a gratis copy of the book they have just published under the title of "Respiratory Re-Education : The Rhycol Cure for Catarrh, Adenoids, and Nose-Breathing Difficulties, &c."



The book contains many illustrations showing how the nasal air-passages are affected in Catarrh, Throat and Voice troubles, Adenoids and Nose-Breathing Difficulties, &c.

The book advocates in a most plain-spoken manner a truly common-sense method of cure of a class of complaint which has hitherto defied all other forms of treatment.

The cure is remarkable, inasmuch as it calls for no sprays or injections, no powders to be snuffed, no operations, and no painful cauterising (burning) of the inflamed mucous membrane.

The new cure is further remarkable as it cures automatically during sleep. Every reader afflicted with Catarrh knows how this hitherto incurable complaint prevents proper breathing. The nose is unable to do its duty of filtering, moistening, and warming the air, and the mouth is called upon to do the work as well as can.

As a result of this extra duty of the mouth, the breathing becomes inefficient and shallow, and frequent head and chest colds are "caught," because of the improper reception of the cold air. The nasal air-passages—by disease—become more and more obstructed, raising Adenoids and Polypi (which in the past have generally had to be operated upon by the surgeon), and throat and voice troubles.

The falling back down the throat, or on to the back of the tongue, of the poisonous, evil-smelling, slimy, mucous matter causes offensive breath and a bad taste in the mouth.

The hearing generally becomes affected, the head feels hot, and the eyes dry (with reactionary spells of acrid watery discharge from eyes and nose).

The senses of smell and taste become seriously impaired.

Even the mouth-breathing is handicapped by the accumulation of catarrhal matter in the bronchial tubes and lungs.

Further, the pent-up catarrhal slime often gets into the stomach and the liver and the kidneys, seriously interfering with their functional action, and frequently giving rise to Catarrh of the Stomach and bladder.

The joint authors of the discovery—as the result of a fruitless quest for relief and cure—were led to experiment along the lines of "the First Cause," the nose and its respiratory functions.

The layman it was who made the first enlightening discovery. Being a singer, he discovered how the nose could be freed (see Free Book).

Immediately the method of cure described by the book is applied, there is striking evidence of its curative powers. It is, as one man puts it, like coming into the fresh air out of a stifling close atmosphere.

Undoubtedly a most powerful factor in the success of the new cure is the fact that it may be employed during the whole of the night without discomfort or any inconvenience. This all-night period of treatment contrasts strongly with the mere two or three minutes of treatment with the now obsolete spraying methods.

The success of the new treatment is immediately obvious to all who try it.

In one night the nose, ears, tongue, and throat give every evidence of the good work of the cure.

In one week the nose and mouth both cease to discharge catarrhal matter. The brain, eyes, and ears feel clear, the mouth and throat clean and sweet, and the taste and smell become as keen as ever.

The new cure quickly puts a stop to:—

- Nasty Dropping in the Throat
- Head Stuffiness
- Nose Stuffiness
- Throat Dryness
- Loss of Smell
- Spitting of Thick Phlegm
- Catarrhal-Coated Tongue
- Discharge from Nose
- Offensive Taste in Mouth
- Catarrhal Deafness
- Bad Breath
- Voice Troubles.

The book explanatory of the new cure contains some most remarkable illustrations, which help to make strikingly clear the common-sense principle upon which the new cure is founded, and which cure, be it noted, is expected, by all who have looked into the matter, to vastly decrease the number of painful and costly operations hitherto considered to afford the only chance of relieving nasal obstructions and inflamed membrane.

An edition of 100,000 copies of the book has been published for free distribution; and all who wish to quickly cure Catarrh, Adenoids, Polypi, or other Nose-Breathing Difficulty, or

Catarrhal Deafness, Throat and Voice and Bad Breath Troubles, should send (or call) for a copy. A penny stamp should be sent to defray postage. The address from which the free copies of the book may be obtained is: The Elvedon Publishers, "Respiratory Re-Education," 91, Rhycol Buildings, 130, Fleet Street, London, E.C.

Those able to call for the book will see life-size and life-like anatomical models showing the Catarrh Centres of the head, ears, nose, throat, &c.



Illustration from book showing catarrh centres of head.



"It's no good : I give in! I'm too tired to go any further. And to think I won last year!" Now I'm too fat, I suppose?"

"Oh, this is dreadful! Why didn't you take Antipon weeks ago, when I advised you to? I did, and I'm pounds and pounds lighter. You might have won again this year."

SLENDER BEAUTY FOR ALL WHO ARE NOW TOO FAT

NO matter if middle-age be passed, or whether the afflicted be quite young or in the prime of life, any over-stout man or woman may easily regain slender beauty with supple strength and radiant health by following the pleasantest treatment ever discovered—the Antipon treatment for the permanent cure of corpulence. No matter if neglect or mistaken treatment have allowed the sufferer to reach the enormous excess weight of five or six stone, Antipon will effect the necessary reduction as nothing else will, and once the weight decreased to normal and the form to symmetrical proportions, there is no need to keep up the treatment, the good work done, the doses cease. Antipon takes off something between 8oz. and 3lb. within twenty-four hours, and there is a delightful new sensation of ease and buoyancy, which is increased with every day's decrease of weight. Unlike most other fat-reducing methods, Antipon does not subject the individual to any disagreeable restrictions. On

the contrary, food and rational comforts and plenty of rest are Antipon's best friends. This wonderful fat decrieser is also a tonic of the best sort, having a most stimulating influence on the alimentary system, increasing appetite, and promoting digestion and assimilation. The extra nutrition does not retard the reduction nor cause redevelopment of fatty excess, for the simple reason that Antipon effectually removes the most obstinate tendency to put on flesh without apparent cause; and that tendency is the disease of obesity, and nothing else. The slender beauty of form recovered by the simple and harmless Antipon treatment is a permanent achievement. Health, grace, comfort, and enjoyment of life are in the gift of Antipon.

Antipon is sold in bottles, price 2s. 6d. and 4s. 6d., by Chemists, Stores, &c.; or, in the event of difficulty, may be had (on remitting amount), carriage paid, privately packed, direct from the Antipon Co., Olmar Street, London, S.E.

WE THINK WE CAN HELP YOU

YOU will be wanting Xmas Gifts for your friends at home and abroad. As a rule you probably leave your shopping until the last moment and then find you cannot always get what you want, for stocks have run out and the shops are crowded.

We are issuing this preliminary list so that you may see that we are already stocked with Xmas novelties, and that by writing or calling *now* you will find the goods fresh and your orders will receive more careful attention than is always possible in the rush later on.



Telegrams: "DERRY, KENSINGTON"

Telephone: 3390 KENSINGTON

DERRY & TOMS
Kensington High Street
LONDON

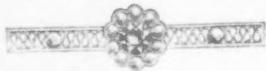
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DERRY & TOMS



No. 1 Safety, with solid Merrythought
in fine gold set
Pearl, 12/6 Turquoise, 10/9



No. 2 Fine Gold Brooch Set
Pearls and Tormalines ... 45/-
Pearls and Peridots ... 42/-
Pearls and Garnets ... 38/6



J 6 Pendant Set
Pearls & Amethysts, 27/6
Pearls & Peridots, 28/6



J 9
Solid Gold Necklet and Pendant
Set Peridots and Rubies, 60/-
Set Amethyst and Peridots, 55/-



No. 11 Fine Gold one-piece Safety Set
Peridot ... 24/6
Amethyst ... 22/6



J 13 Flat Safeties, hinged
1 in. 6/6 1½ in. 7/6 1¾ in. 8/6



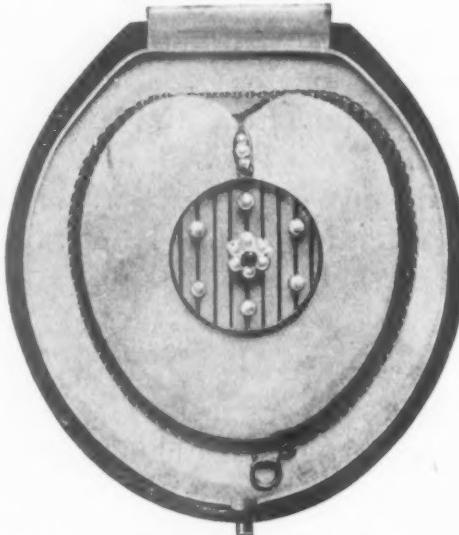
No. 4 Gold Safety, with Bow Set
Pearls ... 7/6
Pearls and Turquoise, 7/9



No. 5 Brooch set Peridots, Amethysts
and Pearls ... 27/6



J 3 Fine Gold Brooch Set
Pearls and Amethysts ... 47/6
Pearls and Peridots ... 50/-



J 8 Fashionable Plaque Pendant with Necklet, solid
gold and real pearls, complete in case £1 : 17 : 6



J 14 Necklet Set
Amethysts and Pearls, 52/-
Peridots and Pearls, 60/-



J 7
Pendant with chased
leaves, amethyst centre
and drop ... 17/6



J 10
Solid Gold Necklet and Pendant,
set Peridots, Heliotropes, and
Olivines ... 47/6



No. 12 Gold Lace Brooch Set
Pearls and Amethyst or Garnet or
Peridot ... 17/6
Pearls and Turquoise or Opal or
Tourmaline ... 19/6



J 15 Plain Gold Safeties
1½ in. 2/6 1¾ in. 3/9 2 in. 6/-

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J 16 Solid Silver Candlestick,
3 ins. high, and 3 ins. diameter
at base ... 8/9 per pair



J 17 The Ideal Boy's Sports Knife
comprising 9 implements ... 2/6



J 18 Solid Silver Ink Pot, diameter
at base, 2½ in. ... 4/9



J 19 Automatic Pocket
Lighter. It never fails.
An ideal present for a
gentleman ... 6/6



J 21 Christmas Silver Lucky Pudding Charms 2/9



J 22 Best Electro-plated
Siphon Stand ... 12/6



J 24 Best Electro-plated Muffin Dish, with
Hot-water Compartment ... 12/9



J 23 Best Electro-plated
Siphon Stand, hamer'd 21/-
Plain ditto ... 18/9

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Empire Toilet Set



J 26 Silver-Mounted Puff Pot
3in. ... 10/- 3½in. ... 12/6
3½in. 16/6 Bath do. 22/6



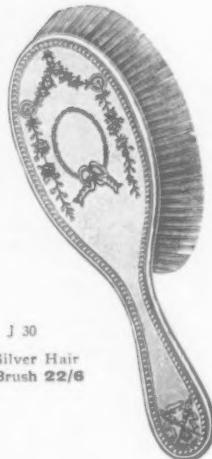
J 27 Silver-Mounted Nail Polisher 7/6



J 29 Silver-Mounted Comb ... 6/0



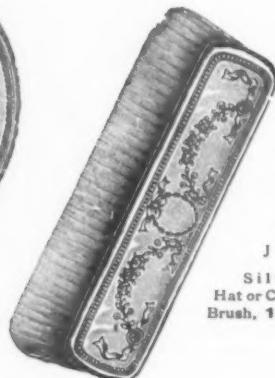
J 28 Silver-Mounted Scent
Bottle. 3in. ... 11/6
3½in. ... 14/6 4in. ... 16/6



J 30
Silver Hair
Brush 22/6



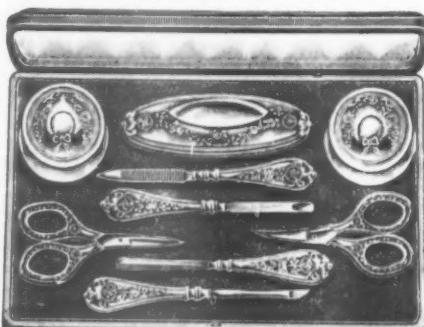
J 31 Silver Hand Mirror ... 42/-



J 32
Silver
Hat or Cloth
Brush, 12/6



J 33 Silver Manicure
Scissors ... 3/-



J 34 Solid Silver Manicure Set ... £2-12-6



J 35 Silver-Mounted
Nail File ... 1/6

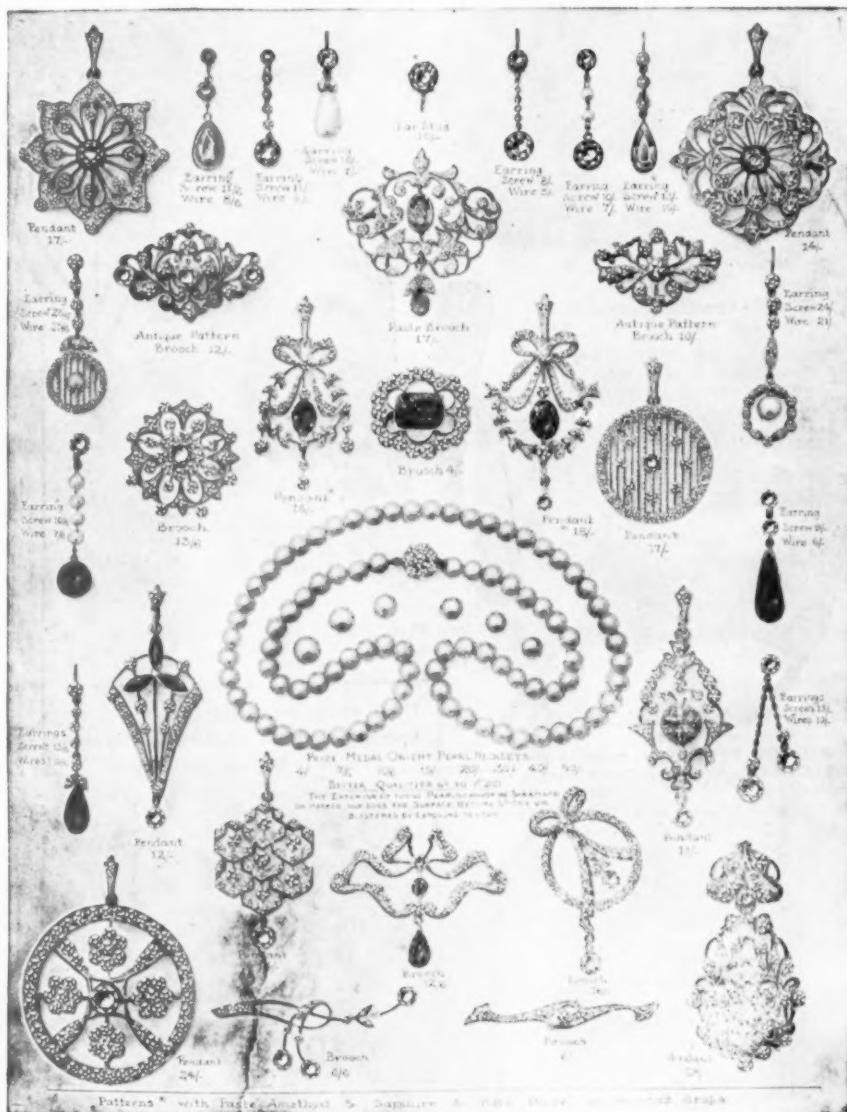
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Derry & Tom—Specialists in copies
of Modern and Antique Jewellery



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FU 1

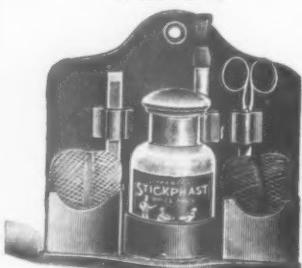
Real Leather Fitted Attache Case. Green, Violet, or Red. 12 in. ... 14/-

We have also an unlimited display of others ranging from 10/- to £5 : 5 : 0.
in all colours and to suit all.



FU 4

Roan Leather Writing Case, exact to sketch, with expanding Pockets. Small size 7/11 Large size 9/11
We have also a large selection from 2/11 to £3 : 3 : 0

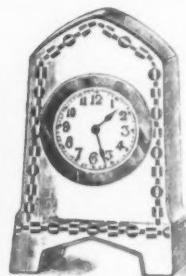


FU 5

Leather Paste Stand. Roan leather. 7/11 : Crushed Morocco ... 12/6



FU 3 Steel Clips,
covered leather,
1/8



FU 4 Pretty China Clocks
6in. high, guaranteed for 2 years, as illustrated. 2 11
Also in 10 other designs.

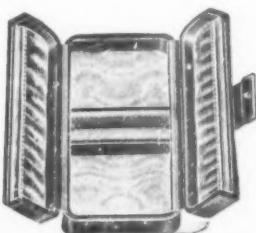


FU 4a Kid Leather
Opera Bag, silk lined,
with mirror at bottom,
purse, etc. ... 3 11

These goods are a representative selection
from our enormous Leather Goods Showroom
(chiefly English Manufacture)



FU 7 Leather Label
Case ... 1/6 each

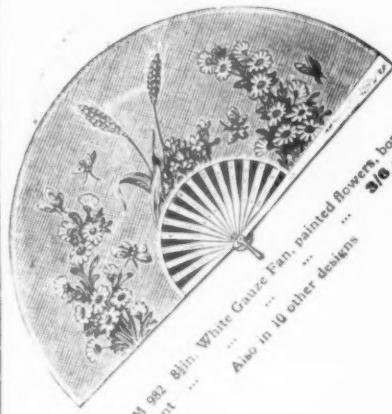


FU 8

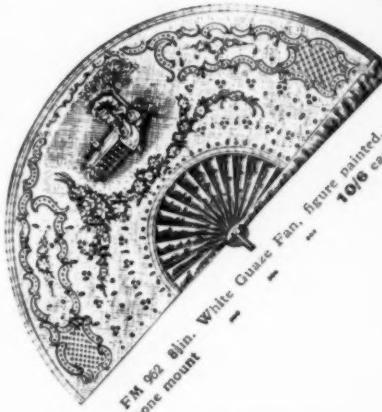
The new "O so Narrow" Jewel
Roan Leather lined Apricot.
Sin. 4/11 6in. 5/11 7in. 6/11
Other shapes and in every kind
of leather,
from 3/11 to £2 : 19 : 6

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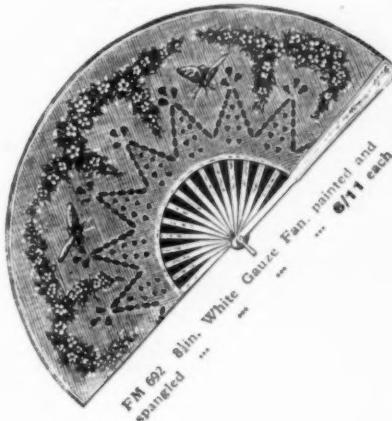
M 902 8in. White Gauze Fan, painted flowers, bone mount ...
Also in 10 other designs ...



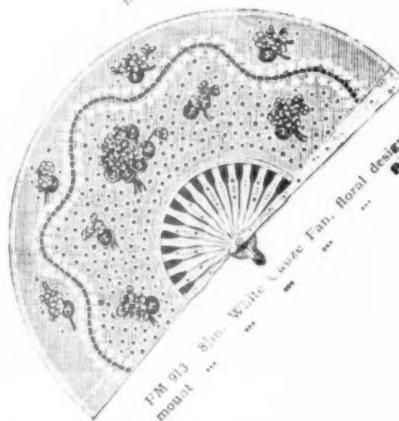
FM 902 8in. White Gauze Fan, figure painted, bone mount ...



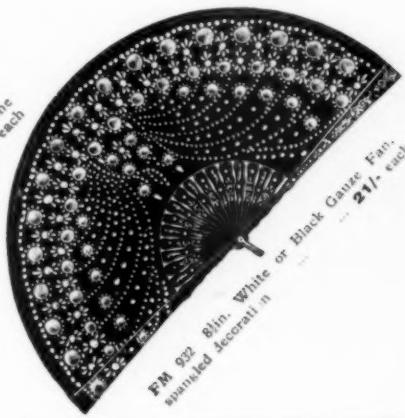
FM 903 8in. White Gauze Fan, floral designs, bone mount ...
In several other designs ...



FM 902 8in. White Gauze Fan, painted and spangled ...



FM 913 8in. White Gauze Fan, floral design, bone mount ...



FM 922 8in. White or Black Gauze Fan, spangled decoration ...

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FM 113 China Silk Shade, trimed gimp,
18 ins. diameter ... Price 7/6



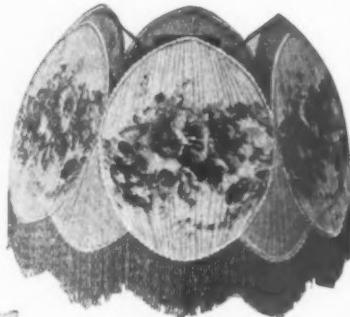
FM 123 Silk Shade, trimed gimp and
bead fringe, 18 ins. diameter. Price 21/9



FM 130 Handsome Chêne Empire Shade,
18 ins. diameter ... Price 27/6
and larger sizes



FM 118 Linen Petal
Rose Shade to clip on
electric bulb. Price 1/3
In pinks, white, red and
yellow



FM 117 Handsome Chêne Silk Shade
with fancy fringe, newest shape.
3 gns.
Size 18 ins. diameter, and larger sizes



FM 125 China Silk Shade, trimed
gimp and bead fringe Price 12/11
18 ins. diameter



FM 127 Narcissus
Shade to clip on
electric bulb 1/11
In pinks, white,
red and yellow

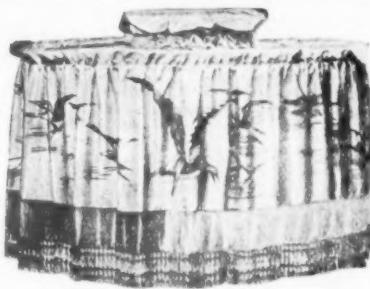


FM 135 Silk Shade, newest design, trimed
gimp and fancy bead fringe ... Price 25/9
18 ins. diameter

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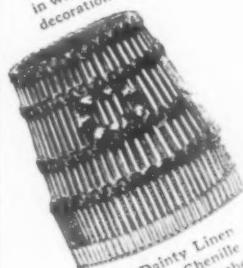
FM 18 "The Swallow Shade," made of fine silk with good bead fringe 35/-



FM 12 Beautifully hand-painted Jap Silk Shade, with expensive fancy bead fringe 37/6



FM 101 Pompadour Candle Shade, in white linen, with various colored decorations, pink, etc. 4/-



FM 109 Dainty Linen Chenille Candle Shade, Chenille decorations, in the usual colors, with bead fringe. 1/3



FM 20 This is one of our most successful lines this season. Made in our own work-rooms. Decorated with hand-cut applique cretonne, any design, or as illustrated, with two colored bead fringe

Table size 15in. and 18in. 16/9. 18/9
Floor size 21in. and 24in. 21/9. 25/9



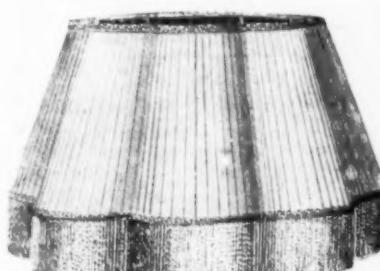
FM 103 Pretty Linen Candle Shade, with Chenille trimming, 6/- each Price



FM 105 Dainty Linen Chenille Candle Shade, Chenille decorations, in the usual colors. 6/-



FM 24 Beautiful Hand-painted Silk Empire Shade, with best bead fringe 21/-



FM 30 Shaped Empire Silk Shade, in pink, 2 shades gold, green, blue, white, etc. 14/9

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R 1. Our Special Fountain Pen (either Mounted or Plain) 14 ct. Gold Nib. **5/11**. Equal to many pens sold at 7s. Every Pen guaranteed and exchangeable.



R 2 Bridge Set. **8/11**. Other qualities,
10/6, **15/6**



R 5 Dainty Leather Address Book, with any Initial blocked in gold ... **1/6**



R 4 Memo Tablets in Leather with Pencil, and any Initial blocked in gold **1/6**, **2/6**, **3/-**
3/6



R 8 In same series. Stories from Dante, Wagner, Shakespeare, Robin Hood **1/-** each

FOUNTAIN PENS.
We specialise in all makes of pens,

Waterman	from	10/6
Swan	...	10/6
Onoto	...	10/6

STYLOS that are reliable.

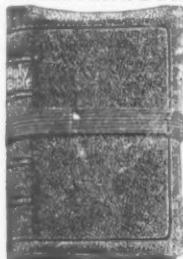
The Wyvern	2/6	3/6
The Terrier	...	1/-
Long Short	...	3/6
The Gnat	...	2/-
Red Dwarf	...	3/9
A. T. Cross. Mounted	6/9	
Memo	...	2/6

R 13



R 11 Autograph Xmas Stationery with Envelopes ... **10/-** box
A large variety also at **6/-** and **1/-**

R 10 Popular Series of Children's Books **2 6/-**



R 12 Special offer. Bible, India paper, refs. and maps, large type ... **5/11** Hall Marked



Chased or Plain Silver Pencils, **1/-**

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R 18 The Indispensable Telephone Directory. 1/-



R 21 Morocco Leather Handy Notes Tablet. Ideal presents 3/6

With or without silver corners



R 24 Masterpieces in color. New Series—Watts, Hogarth, Murillo, Watteau, Millet, Sargent, Raeburn 1/6



R 29 The Ensignette—The Most Perfect Camera. Will fit waistcoat pocket 30/-



R 19 Fairy Tales—Fairy Stories—Forest and Jungle. The novelty of the year in toy books. Pictures are made by the children by inserting animals in back-ground ... 1/4/-



R 22 Packing Cabinet ... 1/-
Basket ... 10/6



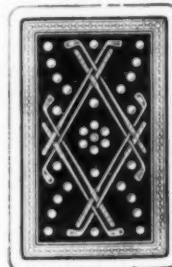
R 20 Quite ... 3/11, 5/6
7/11



R 23 The Handiest Form of News Cutting Case 2/6 & 4/6 With silver corners 4/3 & 7/9



R 27 Patience Set 1 9/- In leather case 3 6



R 25 Special Line Playing Cards, various patterns 1/- pack
Dozen packs ... 10/9



R 26 New Books by Beatrix Potter 1/- each Great Variety.



R 30 Leather Bridge Set 10/6



R 28 Leather Poker Patience 2 or 4 packs ... 5/6



R 31 Art Linen Bridge Set. A dainty present 5/6 Complete with Scorers

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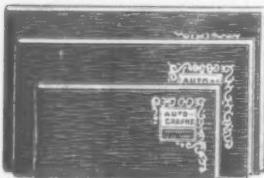
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R 32
Engagement
Tablet ... 1/-
A useful present



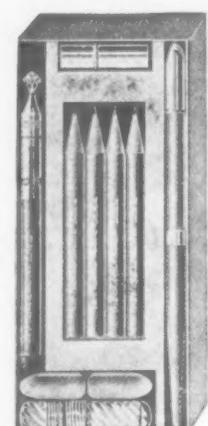
R 33
Novelty Calendars
1/6 each
Various designs



R 37 Dainty Series, size $2\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$... 1/-
 $3\frac{1}{2} \times 6$... 1.6 $4\frac{1}{2} \times 6$... 2.-



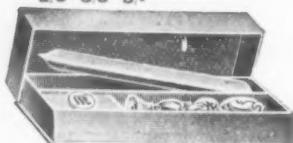
R 40 Visitors' Books 2/11
5 6 7/11 12 6 17/6



R 45 The Rainbow Set of
Writing Materials, complete
in box ... Price 10d.



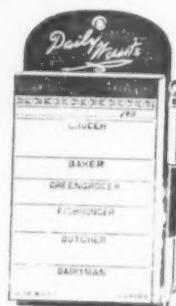
R 38 Chatelaine Diary or
Note Book
2/6 3/6 5/-



R 43 Initial Sealing Set.
Any initial ... 2.6



R 41 Useful Present
10d.



R 42 Useful Article in
Art Linen ... 10d.
In Morocco Case 3/11



R 46 Combined Blotting Pad and Diary.
Price 1/11



R 34
Novelty Calendars
1/6 each
Various designs



R 35
Post Card Stand
in art linen, with
calendar ... 1/11



R 40 The newest Pencil Set
Everything in royal purple 1/-



R 44
Telephone
Directory and
Writing Tablet
4/-
7/6 in Morocco
leather



R 47 Walker's Back Loop
Pocket Books and Diaries.
6d 1/- 2/- 3 6 5-

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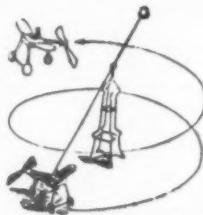
Toys and Novelties



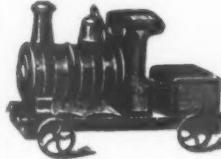
U 1
"Every Dog has his Day!"
Cæsar, King Edward's Dog
6d. 1/- 2/11 4/11 6/11



U 5 Tuck's Latest Novelty
Price ... 10d.



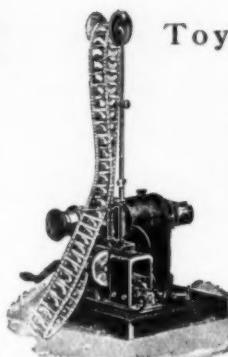
U 8 New Aeroflite, clock-work. Rises from ground and flies like an aeroplane
1/- 1/11 2/11



U 9 Strong Wood Engines
English made
1/- 1/11 2/4 2/11
3 11 5/- 7/6



U 12 Splendid Toy for Boys. Escort in active service dress ... B/11



U 2 The Dynamograph. Can be used as a cinematograph or magic lantern. Works by electricity ... 42/-



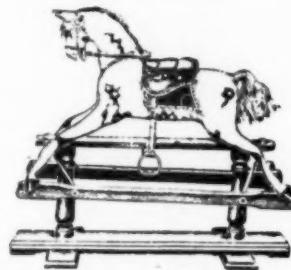
U 3
The Garden Barrow, English made, very strong. In 3 sizes
5/11, 8/11
12/6



U 4 New Game for any number, 6d., 1/-, 2/6

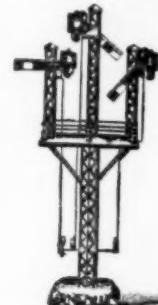


U 6 The most Diverting Games
6d., 1/- and 2/6



U 10 The Safety Rocking Horse

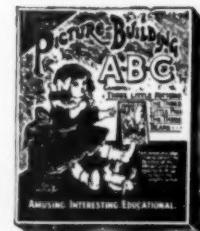
Ab ut height to saddle	1ft. 11in. 2 .. 31 .. 2 .. 71 .. 3 .. 01 .. 3 .. 41 ..	Length of stand	2ft. 6in. ... 18/6 3 .. 01 .. 21/- 3 .. 81 .. 30/- 4 .. 41 .. 42/- 4 .. 91 .. 52/6
------------------------	--	-----------------	--



U 7 Signals ... 4/11
Smaller sizes, 6d., 1/-,
2/3



U 11 Water Pistols, 6d.
and 1/-



U 14 One of the best toys of the year. Box containing 3 pictures to build, and each part represents a letter of the alphabet ... 1/4



U 13 Musical Boxes
1/6, 2/6, 3/6, 4/6, 7/6,
10/6 and 15/6

XMAS
CATALOGUE
DERRY & TOMS

D
8



U 17 Air Guns, 3/- Better make, 12/-



U 18 New Game for Indoors, 1/-



U 19 Electric Lamps for Stations 1/- 2/- and 3/-

THE AUTOMATIC FLAG SIGNALLER

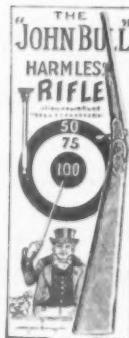


PROV. PATENT NO. 18919.
INVALUABLE TO SCOUTS OF ALL AGES.

U 20 The merest novice can learn from this toy, 1/- & 2/-



U 21 Kid Body Dolls 1/- 1/6 2/- 3/- to 15/-



U 22

The game which trains the eye. 6d. 1/- 2/- Larger sets 5/- & 7/-



U 23 The Success of the Season Baby Bumps, the Unbreakable Doll, 5/-



U 24 Mr. Puck, 2/- The favorite Toy, stuffed with cork, floats in water



U 25 The Rage of London, 5/-

This is the celebrated Unbreakable Doll Billiken



U 26 Every time you hit the bull the rabbit kicks and cries. 2/-

SOLVING THE "DREADNOUGHT" QUESTION



EVERY BOY CAN BUILD ONE AT HOME

SEE PRECEDING PAGE

KENSINGTON HIGH ST
LONDON W 1 2 3

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E



U 28 Very strong English made Toy, in 3 sizes 2/6. 3/6. 5/6



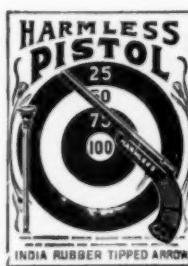
U 29 Soldier Skittles, 6d. and 1/- set.



U 33 A Perfect Toy for a Girl. Made to work 1/-. Larger sizes, 1/11. 3/11 Better make 7/6. 15/6



U 31 The New Character Baby Dolls.
Undressed 6d., 1/-, 2/3. 3/11. 7/6
Daintily Dressed 4/6. 5/6. 7/6. 10/6



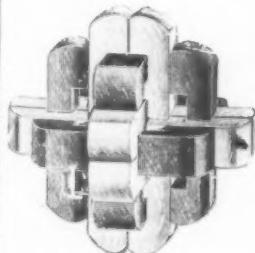
U 35
Popular Toy for boys,
6d. and 1/-



U 30 The Surprise Mutoscope,
contains a Snake 6 ft. in length, which
springs out on turning handle ... 1/6



U 34 Travelling Menagerie.
Goes by Clockwork and contains Miniature Wild Animals
4/11½



U 39 Interlocking Puzzles 1/-
A variety always in stock,
6d. and 1/-



U 37
Fairy Dolls
1/-
1/9
2/11
3/11
4/11
7/6
10/6



U 32 Station Lamps,
1/- 1/11 3/11
Various patterns



U 38
Character Baby Dolls,
2/6. 5/6. 7/6. 10/6



Interlocking Blocks to build any number of designs, 1/-. 2/-. 3/6. 5/-. 7/6

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DERRY & TOMS



T 1 All Brass Cake Stands,
well finished, 20 ins. high.
Special price ... 9/11



T 2 All Copper Kettle and Stand with good
burner. English made. Well finished
2-pt. 8/6 3-pt. 10/6
1-pt. Copper Kettle on Brass Stand, 3/6
Extraordinary Value



T 4
The Chic Egg Decap-
itator. Wonderful
value and a most
useful present
Special price ... 1/6



T 5 Log Boxes in Brass. Hand-made, on Castors
These boxes make handsome and useful presents
Special Value. Small, 14/9 Large 19/11
Linings for same ... 5/3 ... 6/9



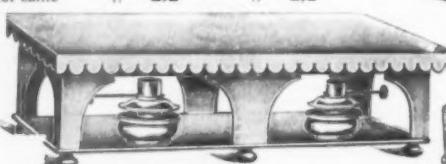
T 6 The 'Brilliant' Spirit Stove, un-
doubtedly the most useful, cheapest
and simplest stove made. No wick,
no smoke, no smell. Size of flame can
be regulated. Suitable for domestic
purposes, pic-nics, and river parties.
Tested to cook a breakfast for three
persons at the cost of three farthings
Price of Stove 7/6



T 3 Nickel Plated Reflector
Candle Lamp, most useful for
reading or writing.
Special Value 3/11. 5/11
Telescopic ... 10/9
Candles for same 1/3 box



T 7 Polished Copper Shav-
ing Mugs, well tinned
inside ... 3/6



T 8 Copper Table Heaters, with removable top.
Size 14x9x6 ins. 22/6 Size 24x9x6 ins. 37/6
Good Value. The 14 in. has 1 lamp; 24 in. 2 lamps



T 9 Copper Table Heaters, with removable top.
Size 14x9x6 ins. 22/6 Size 24x9x6 ins. 37/6
Good Value. The 14 in. has 1 lamp; 24 in. 2 lamps

T 10 Copper or Brass Crumb Scoop
Hammered. 4/11 Plain 3/11

T 11 Silver-plated
Hot Water Tumbler
Holder, complete
with glass
Medium size 2/6;
Larger ... 2/11



T 12 Brass or Copper Candlesticks complete with Glass Cylinder and Extinguisher. Saves grease dropping on the floor ... 4/-
Japanned Red, Blue or Green 1/3.



T 13 Special Purchase of Coal Cauldrons. Very strong. Note prices.
All Black 1/9
Black with Copper or Brass Band 3/11
Black Coal Tonga ... 6/-d
Black and Copper ... 1/9



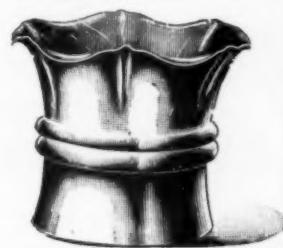
T 14 "Clemak" Safety Razors complete in case with 7 extra blades, 5/-, 7/6, 10/6
Auto-Strop Safety Razors 21/-
Gillette Safety Razors ... 21/-



T 15 The cheapest Coal Scuttle in the market, very strong and highly finished, all Brass or Copper 9/11
Black with Copper Handle 4/6



T 16 Very fine White Wicker Bread or Biscuit Baskets with Nickel rim and foot, very special prices.
8in. 10/-d. 10in. 1/4/- 11in. 1/9



T 17 Fern Pots, Brass or Copper, well finished. Exceptional value. 6/-d. each. Set of 4 2/-



T 18 Cast Brass Teapot or Kettle Stand, on feet, price 1/3



T 19 Best quality Copper Hot Water Muffin Dishes with Copper Cover.
Size 8in. 9in. 8/6 Plain
9/11 11/9 Hammered



T 20 Florentine Frames, English Gilt, warranted untarnishable oval or square opening. Cabinet size 1/9



T 21 Brass or Copper Table Heaters with Wrought Iron Stand. The top is removable so that it can be used for boiling a kettle 9/11



T 22 Antique Coppered Waiters well finished. Special price 9in. 10/-d. 11in. 1/3



T 23 Cast Brass Hearth Stands, Special price 3/6



T 25 Cast Brass Hearth Stands, highly polished.
Size 6x6x4 high ... 5/11
.. 9x5x4 .. 6/9
.. 11x6x5 .. 9/6
.. 12x7x5 .. 11/6
.. 16x6x4 .. 14/9

Anostle or Thistle Tea Spoons, Best quality Electro-plate. Extraordinary value 4/6 dozen. Tongue to match 1/3

THE DEEANTE CUTLERY PARCEL, comprising 45 articles 30/-
viz. 6 Table Knives 6 Table Spoons 6 Tea Spoons
6 Dessert Knives 6 Table Forks 1 Pair Meat Carvers
6 Dessert Spoons 6 Dessert Forks 1 Steel
All Warranted to wear White throughout.

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L 6



L 6

Quaint Shape
Harlequin Tea Cups
and Saucers.
Gold, Green, Turquoise,
Heliotrope, 1/9
Dark Blue, Marone,
1/11
Plates, Siz. 8/9 dozen.



L 7

CHINA TEA SERVICE.

Empire Design. Basket of Gold Flowers. Either shape C.
40 Pieces, 12/11 21 Pieces 7/11



L 8

Fine China
Harlequin Coffee
Cups,
Gold, Green,
Turquoise,
Heliotrope,
per 9/6 dozen,
Dark Blue and
Marone,
12/5



L 4
EARLY MORNING SET.

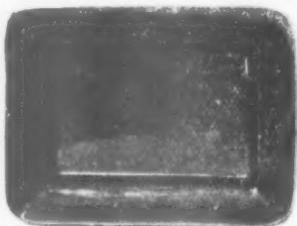
Quaint Colored Chintz Design ... 7/6
Plain Green Tray ... 2/6



L 5
EARLY MORNING SET.

Colored Dresden Design, Gold Tracings ... 4/11
Plain Oak Tray, White Cane Rim ... 2/11

Trays for Morning Sets are interchangeable.



Reproduction of OLD ROSE du BARRIE Pottery, Beautifully Glazed.

Trinket Tray	2/6	Flower Vases, Various Shapes.	Jardinières (as sketch)	1/11
Trinket Boxes	8 d. 1/0	3 4 5 6 7 8 9 12 inches	Hat Pin Stands	1/-
Candlesticks	1/4. 2 6	4 d. 6 d. 1/- 1/9 2 3 2/11 each	Ash Trays	6/4
Flat Candlesticks	1/0	Fern Pots, 7 d. 1 1/1. 4 6. 6/11		



L 6
EARLY MORNING SET.
Festoons of Daintily Colored Roses. 2/6
Oblong Green Tray. 1/0



L 8
EARLY MORNING SET.
Cock and Rising Sun Design, "Good Morning." 6/11
Oval Green Tray. 2/11

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DERRY & TOMS



L.14 Hand Screens. Natural Coloured Feathers, 8 designs 10/-

THE NEW
"KENSINGTON"
LAMP.

Burns Nightlights.

6 hours.

1 per Box of 12



KENSINGTON
LAMP

for Table Decoration

Cut Glass Pillar with any colour

Linen Shade with Pearl Bead Fringe

Complete 1/11/-

Smaller size 1/5

L.15



L.16
Salve Box ... 13. 2/-
Georgian Box ... 19. 29



L.17 Quaint Jug ... 1/-, 1/6



L.18
Cup and Saucer ... 1/3 2/-



L.19
Ink Stand, large enough for use ... 26. 4/-



Dainty
Padded Boxes
Free



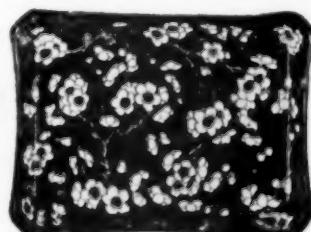
L.20
Pot Pourrie Jar, 2 shapes, 1/3 and 2/-



L.21
Casket, 2/- and 3/-



L.22
Grecian Vase ... 3/- and 4/-



L.23
Ash or Pin Tray, 1/0 and 2/6

(THE NEW FORM OF XMAS CARDS)

CROWN STAFFORD Hand-Painted Miniatures, 3 designs, 17 shapes :-

Design No. 1 Chinese Plum Blossom on Green Ground.

" " 2 Sevres Rosebuds, Dark Blue Ground, Burnished Gold Relief.

" " 3 Rich Dark Blue with Scroll Edging, in Burnished Gold.

The lower price in each article is for No. 1 Design, and Nos. 2 and 3 Designs are for the second prices.

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FC 1 Figured Oak Bureau
interior fitted for stationery
complete with blotting pad
and ink pot. Height 4ft.,
width 2ft. 3in. ... **29/11**



FC 2
Artistic Table Bookstand
in fumed oak, 16½in. long,
2/11½ Ditto with inlaid
edges. **3/11**



FC 3
Table Reading Stand in
antique or fumed oak, 8in.
wide. Useful Gift. **2/11½**



FC 4
Magazine Stand in Antique
Waxed or Fumed Oak, with
embossed enamel and pewter
mount. Height 3ft. 3in.,
width 1ft. 3in., depth 12in.
Oak 25/6 Mahogany 32/6



FC 7
"The Osterley"
Patent Folding Tray Table
Polished Walnut or Mahogany **31/6** Solid Walnut
or Mahogany **39/6**. Inlaid
Mahogany **59/6**



FC 8
Dainty Floor Bookstand,
height 2ft. 3in., depth 8½in.,
width 1ft. 6in.
Fumed Oak ... **10/6**
Inlaid Oak ... **11/9**
Inlaid Mahogany ... **18/6**



FC 9
The "Old-Time" Dinner Call,
in weathered oak, inlaid with inscriptions
from Byron. Height
21in., width 13ins. ... **17/11**



FC 12 Waxed Oak Bookcase, inlaid with boxwood and ebony. Cupboard with lead light door. Height 53in. Width 13in. **18/11**
In solid mahogany. **21/-**



FC 10
Reproduction
of Brittany
Boot Lacing Stool
Made in Waxed
Oak. Only **2/11**



FC 13 Nest of 3 Tea Tables. Height 2ft. 2in. Width 1ft. 7in.
Inlaid Mahogany ... **33/9**
Plain ... **29/6**
Fumed Oak ... **25/-**
Nest of 4 **47/6** **42/6** **29/11**
Inlaid Mahogany **29/11**

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S

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FC 105 Fumed Oak Writing Bureau, with cupboard and lead light door, interior fitted for stationery. Height 5ft., width 2ft. 4in. ... 27/6



FC 97 Useful Rush Seat Armchair, for fireside use, fumed oak or mahogany color 8/11
Ditto, without arms 6/11



FC 9 Mozart Music Cabinet, polished walnut or mahogany color, fitted with patent swing drawer fronts. Height 2ft. 9in. with 1ft. 8in. 29/6



FC 121 Cosy Fireside Chair, with adjustable back, finished in mahogany or oak color, upholstered in corduroy velvet, in red, blue, green, and gold. Exceptional value. 19/11



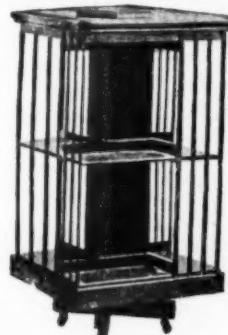
FC 95. Charming reproduction of antique Flemish Stool, in weathered oak, height 15in. top 16x16 in. 4/11



FC 29
The "Franco" Bridge Table, as illustration, folds quite flat. 30x25in.
In solid oak, 8/11. Dov. Polished Mahogany, 10/6



FC 4 Solid Oak Bureau, fitted for stationery, complete with blotter and inkwell. Height 4ft., width 2ft. 19/11 each



FC 59 Revolving Floor Book-Case, 3ft. high, top 18in. square
Fumed Oak, 27/6
Mahogany, 31/6
Inlaid Mahogany, 35/6



FC 62 Panelled Draught Screen in solid weathered oak, with poker work panels. 5ft. 8in. x 20in. Price in 3-fold 25/6; 4-fold. 35/6

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NOVELTIES in 1911 CALENDARS



O 2 The Blue Bird Calendar, real feathers
Special price ... 1/-



O 1 Florentine Frame Date Calendar,
in 3 sizes 6d. 9d. 1/-



O 4 Wild Duck Calendar
beautifully colored, real
feathers 2/6



O 5 Daily Tear-off
Block Calendar, 6d.

O 6 Miniature Panels of Famous Pictures,
with calendar on back. Landscapes, sea-
scapes, figure, sporting, 4½d. each, 6/6 doz.



O 7 The Two Bunnies Calendar
cut out in fur ... 10d.
In brown and black



O 8 Great Thoughts.
Daily Tear-off Block
Calendar. ... 6d.



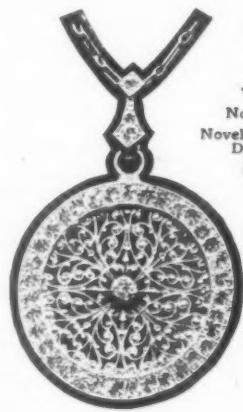
O 9 The Squirrel Calendar made
in fur and artistically finished 2 11

Derry & Toms' Special box of Xmas Cards 25 in box Sterling Value 1/-
Derry & Toms' Box of Calendar Greeting Cards, 10 in box, with Envelopes 1/-
Special Surprise Box of Xmas Novelties for Children, 6 in box assorted, with Envelopes ... 6d. box

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No. 1157
Novel Filigree Design
8/11

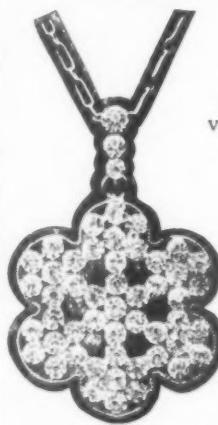


No. 12283
Dainty Paste
Plaque
8/11



No. 16667
Dainty Present. Paste and
Platine ... 4/11

No. 12281
Very effective
design
8/11



No. 3341
Fine Brilliant
French design
16/6



No. 12339
Pearl and Paste Plaque. Very
effective ... 10/6

SPECIMENS
of the New French
Plaque Jewellery

No. 12340
Newest Design
French Plaque
8/11

No. 17645
Paris Design,
Paste and
Platine
8/11

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Y 1404 Dainty Box with Frills
Lawn Handkerchiefs, 6d box,
3 for 10s. Better Nos. 10/-
1/-, 1/6, 1/11



1000 Derry & Toms' Celebrated Woollen
Guard's Rugs, in the guards colors, navy
blue and red stripes, very soft wool,
extremely warm and very light. As a
coverlet it has few equals; for the auto-
mobile, ocean travel and holiday tours it
is hard to beat. Made in 3 useful sizes.

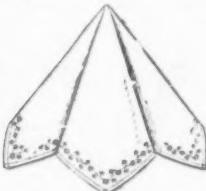
Size.	Price.	Bundle of 6
50 x 70 in.	4/9	27 6
60 x 76 "	6/11	30 9
70 x 80 "	8/11	50/-

DONAGHADEE. Sham-
rock Irish H.S. Embroidered
Cotton Tray Cloth.
14 x 20in. Price 10/- each.
16 x 24in. " 1/2/- "
18 x 27in. " 1/6/- "
Assorted designs. Post free

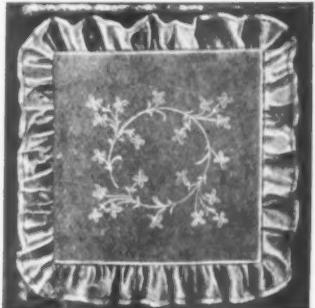


Plain Pongee Covered Baby Down
Quilts. Sky, pink, cardinal and white

Frilled as above	No Frills
20 x 30 ... 6/11	20 x 30 ... 4/11
22 x 32 ... 10 1/2	22 x 32 ... 8 1/2



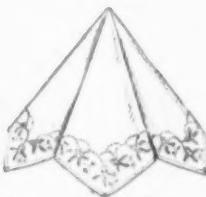
Y 300 2,384 beautiful Irish
Embroidered Linen and
Lawn Ladies' Handker-
chiefs, a few Lace trimmed
All 6/- each



FILLYBURN. 600 Snow White Irish
Embroidered Lawn Cushion Covers, 20in.
square only Usually 2/6. 1/6/- each.

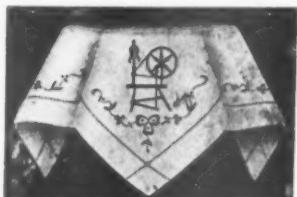


GREY ABBEY. 300 only Iri h
Embroidered Tea Cosie Covers,
embroidered both sides ... 1/6/-



Y 400 1,884 Handsome
Irish Embroidered White
Lawn and Linen Ladies'
Handkerchiefs. Price 6/-

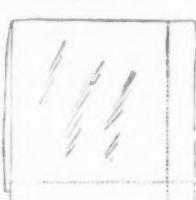
Y 500 700 only extremely
fine quality Irish Linen
and Lawn Embroidered
Ladies' Handkerchiefs
Price 1/0/- each



DOWNPATRICK. Quaint Irish Em-
broderied Tea Cloths. 36 x 36in. 1/11
45in. 4/11. 54in. 6/11 each.



CARROWDORE. 800 only Dainty Irish
Snow White Frilled and Embroidered
Nightdress Cases, size 15 x 19in. Price
1/0/- each. Better Nos. hemstitched and
embroidered ... 1/6, 1/11, 2/-



Y 80 Gents All Linen
hemstitched Handkerchiefs,
18 x 18, lin. hem. All at 6/-
2,000 Ladies' All Linen, 13 x 13,
lin. hem. All at 6/- each.



KILLIBEGS. 100 only Japanese
Hand-Drawn Linen H.S. Pin
Cushions. 5 x 5in. Price 1/0/-

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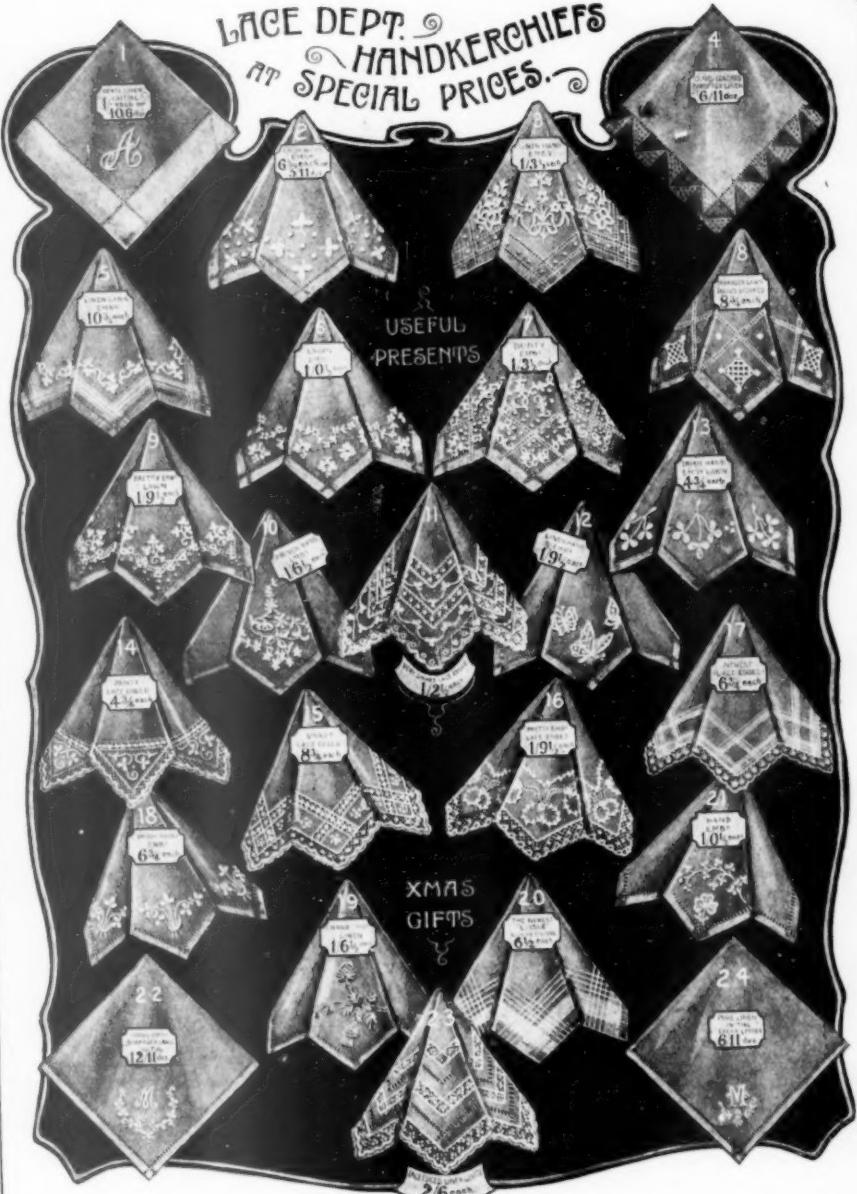
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LACE DEPT. ◊
HANDKERCHIEFS
AT SPECIAL PRICES. ◊

USEFUL
PRESENTS

XMAS
GIFTS

PRINTED LACE



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Dainty Lace Neckwear for Xmas Presents



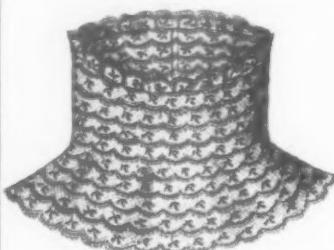
Lace 1 Dainty Net Jabot, edged imitation Val. lace, in white and ecru ... Special Price, 4/11



Lace 2 Dainty Embroidered Canvas Linen Coat Collar
Special Value 2/6



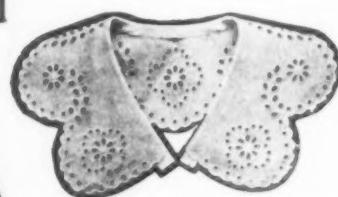
Lace 3 Dainty Net Cravat, with guipure collar band and rabat, in white only...Special Price, 2/11



Lace 4 Smart Yoke of Val. Lace, in white or ecru, perfect fitting
Exceptional Value 1/11



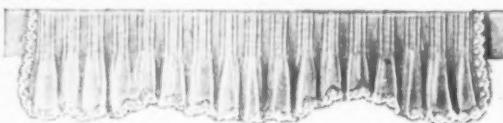
Lace 5 Smart Lawn Jabot, trimmed with
guipure lace, in white only... Price 1/11



Lace 6 Pretty Embroidered Collar
Exceptional Value 1/-



Lace 7 Smart Net Jabot
as sketch, in white and
ecru, folds of Paisley silk
Special Value ... 2/11



Lace 8 Dainty Muslin Collar and Cuffs, edged
with Val. lace. Hand made
Special Price 2/11 $\frac{1}{2}$ complete set



Lace 9 Dainty Net Jabot
As sketch .. Price 2/3
With Collar .. 2/11

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Maids' Aprons and Caps
At exceptionally Low Prices.



Lace 10
Smart Cambric Apron,
2/11½



Lace 11
Cambric Apron. Plain
Skirt 2/6



Lace 12
Goffer Frills. After-
noon Apron ... 2/11½



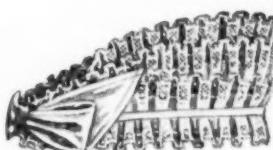
Lace 13
Fine Cambric Apron,
Wheel Insertion 3/6



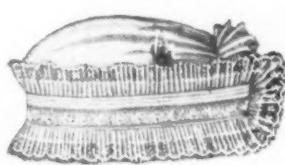
Lace 14
Smart Apron, Embroidered
Skirt 2/11½



Lace 16
Embrodered Mob Cap ... 1/11½



Lace 18
Muslin and Lace Coronet Cap ... 1/6½



Lace 15
Smart Book Muslin Cap ... 2/3½

Useful
Christmas
Presents



Lace 19
Spec. Muslin Coronet Cap ... 1/0½

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E 1

Caracul Plush Scarves and Muffs,
lined White or Black Satin.

Scarf 14/11 Muff 14/11
or the Set 27/8



E 3

Scarf of rich Velvet, lined white
satin, with tassels to match
each color: black, royal, grey,
prunella, vieux rose, mole,
emerald 9/11

Fashionable Seal Plush Scarves
and Muffs, lined White or Black
Satin. Effect equal to fine quality
skins

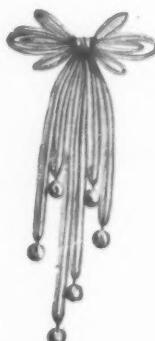
Scarf 14/11 Muff 14/11
The Set 27/8



E 4

Real Poplin or Crepe-de-chine
Open-end Tie. Black, white,
navy, brown, moss, residia, violet
heliotrope, saxe, sky, vieux rose,
grey, mole, emerald, cardinal.

1/11



E 5

Satin Jabot. Black,
white, pink, sky, vieux
rose, mauve saxe, and
turquoise ... 1/3



E 6

Fine quality Crepe-de-chine
Ties. Black, sky, turquoise,
pink, mauve, saxe, navy,
cinnamon, myrtle, vieux
rose 10/4d



E 7

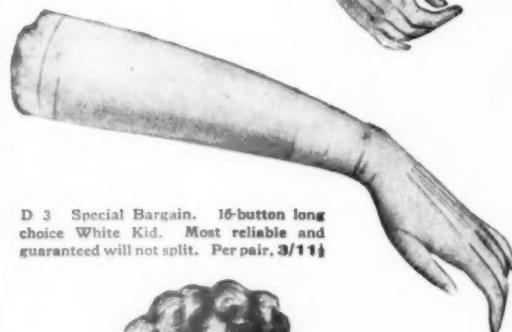
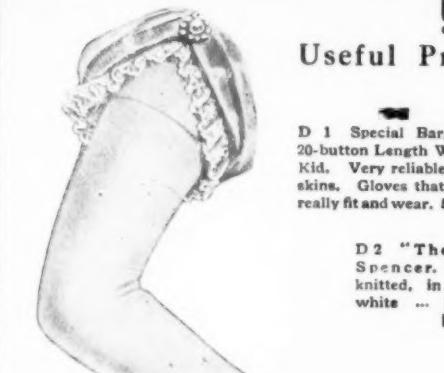
Pretty Tie of Satin and
Paisley. Black, cream, sky
pink, mauve, turquoise,
navy, saxe ... 1/3

D
6

Useful Presents

D 1 Special Bargain.
20-button Length White
Kid. Very reliable soft
skins. Gloves that will
really fit and wear. 5/11

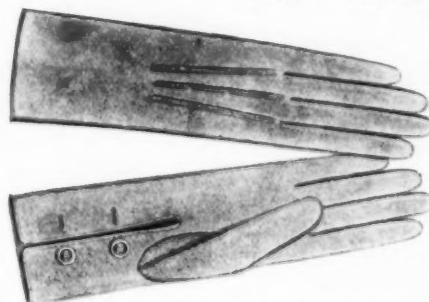
D 2 "The Orkney"
Spencer. Shetland
knitted, in grey and
white ... Price 2/11



D 3 Special Bargain. 16-button long
choice White Kid. Most reliable and
guaranteed will not split. Per pair, 3/11



D 5 Dainty Lace Blouse of extraordinary
quality, exact as sketch ... Price 8/11



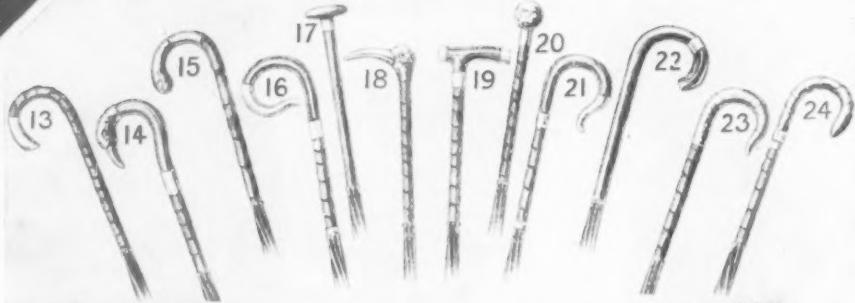
D 6 Great Bargain in Ladies' Real Russia
Gloves, in soft shades of Russian tans, with 2
pearl buttons. Most useful glove. Per pair, 2/6

KENSINGTON HIGH ST
LONDON W 2 H 2

SEE NEXT
PAGE

XMAS
CATALOGUE
DERRY & TOMS

D
8



Partridge Cane, Pimento Wood
and Ash Handles

LADIES' UMBRELLAS
all one Price
10/9

Silver, Gunmetal and Horn
Handles

. These Prices .
Include Postage

Laventine Silk Covers

Best-Class London-made
... Umbrellas ...



Rich Pure
Silk Covers

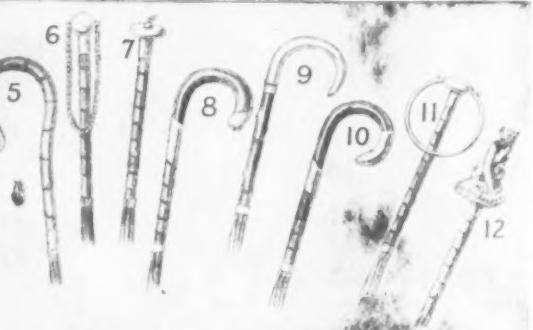
LADIES' UMBRELLAS
15/9

GENTS'
UMBRELLAS
10/9
Malacca, Partridge Cane
and Horn Handles

Silk
Mixture Covers

Silver, Gunmetal, Partridge Cane
Horn Handles

Silver, Gunmetal, Partridge Cane
Horn Handles



Rich quality pure Silk Covers
Small rolling

LADIES' UMBRELLAS
all one Price
21/9

Silver, Gunmetal, Horn, and
Gold-mounted Hand

SEE PRECEDING
PAGE

KENSINGTON HIGH ST
LONDON W X U X

XMAS
CATALOGUE
DERRY & TOMS

D
T

Winsome Styles : Extraordinary Values

Latest Styles combined with comfort & quality



W 1 Useful Walking Shoe, in Black Glace Kid or Patent Leather, flat ribbon bow 12/9



W 2 Perfect-fitting Button Boot, patent cap 24/9
Also same design in Lace.



W 3 Very Smart Oxford Shoe, patent caps ... 10/9 14/9 18/9 21/9
Always in stock

Materials and Workmanship our first consideration

SNOW BOOTS AND GOLOSSES

Prices subject to market fluctuation:



W 5 Storm Goloshi. 3/6 Pointed and medium toes

Boots and Shoes that really fit and give satisfactory wear



W 4 OUR SPECIALITY

Dainty Satin Court Shoe. Colors: black, white, pale blue, pink, mauve, bronze, grey, emerald, etc. 5/11

Derry & Toms' Boot and Shoe Dept. for foot comfort



W 6

Very special inexpensive Evening Shoe, openwork design ... Black 10/9 Bronze 11/9



W 8 Quilted Satin Bedroom Slipper with Heels. Colors: bronze, black, pink, blue, cardinal, mauve. Very dainty 8/11



W 9 Quilted Satin Slipper with Felt Sole. Useful present for Xmas. Colors: mauve, brown, pale blue, pink, black, emerald, ruby ... 2/11

KENSINGTON HIGH ST
LONDON W 8 E 2

SEE NEXT PAGE

CHRISTMAS
CATALOGUE
DERRY & TOMS

D
S

USEFUL PRESENTS FOR GENTS' WEAR



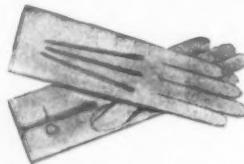
M 6 Gents' Flannel Pyjamas
7/11 10/6 12/6 15/6 21/-
Silk ditto, 21/- and 27/6



M 5 White Silk Mufflers, 4/11 6/6
8/6 10/6 12/6 15/6 21/- and 25/-



M 7 Gents' Tan Cape ... 2/6 pair
Hand Sewn ditto ... 4/6 ..
Tan or Grey Reindeer 6/6 and 10/6



M 8 Gents' Fancy Dressing
Gowns, 15/6 21/- 27/6
30/- 35/- to £5 5s.



M 1 Travelling Rugs, 4/11 to 63/-



M 2 Black Cashmere Socks,
embroidered clover
Price ... 10/- 2/6 3/- pair



M 3 Heather Wool Jacket, 18/6 18/6
and 25/- For hunting or travelling



M 4 Fancy Ties 1/9 2/6
3/6 and 4/6

SEE PRECEDING
PAGE

KENSINGTON HIGH ST
LONDON W ... : : :

Ask to see
the "RAPHAEL HOUSE"
and "OUR QUEEN" series
of Private Christmas Greeting Cards



**Dr. R. Marouche,
M.D., B.S.C.**
—“The accuracy
with which he describes
these little facts
known only to myself,
leaves me somewhat
perplexed.”

**Capt. A. R. Walker,
R.E.**—“He told me of
events my most intimate
friends could not be cognizant of,
and things are happening
exactly as he foretold, in spite of
the fact that he has never seen me.”

Rub some stove black or ink
on the thumbs, press them on
paper; send, with birth date and
time (if known), a P.O. for 1s. (or
cost of chart, etc., to be sent you, and
stamped envelope. I will give you a
FREE READING OF YOUR LIFE
from chart, to advertise my success.

PROF. Z. T. ZAZRA, 90, New Bond St.,
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A Professional Man writes:—YOU

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The ISON METHOD WITHOUT
OPERATION effects marvellous
cures in Eye and Ear Diseases, Deaf-
ness in its various forms. Notes in the
Head and Ears, Ear Discharges, etc.
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(Established 1871)

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GRADUAL PAYMENTS
SEND FOR LIST
THOMAS WILD, GUNMAKER, BIRMINGHAM.



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REMARKABLE INVENTION.

This unique preparation is composed of chemically dissolved metal, which, unlike any ordinary dressing, thoroughly saturates the leather strop. The effect upon a razor after but a few strokes is extraordinary. No other sharpener in the world will give to your razor the protected edge which results from using a Kemoline strop.

Makes your Razors last a Lifetime.

A good razor will last for years, but how often is one thrown away after but a short time? Why? Not because you can't stir a razor, but because you are using an inferior strop. Do you want your razors to be always sharp and ready for use? If so, you must use a Kemoline strop, and we invite you to

TRY IT FREE FOR FIFTEEN DAYS.

Send us a postal order, and you will receive a Kemoline strop by return. Use it for Fifteen Days, and if it is not in every way as represented, your money will be returned to you in full.

KEMOLINE RAZOR SHARPENER CO.,
114, Fenchurch Street, London, E.C.

2/9

xviii



Sold with
a guarantee.—
“If your
OMNE TEMPUS
fails to keep out
the rain, we will
take it back.”

**The only
Rubberless
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Coat with a
guarantee.**

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Free or Coats
forwarded on
approval.

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Randy Post
in all sizes
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BURGESS' LION OINTMENT.
It has been many times a medical
Cured others after being given up by Hospitals.
The BEST REMEDY for WOUNDS and all SKIN
DISEASES. A CURE ALREADY 122,000
TIMORS. Also 122,000
TROOPS. Testimonials from Paris,
London, &c. Send 2s. per box, or post free for P.O. from
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**2/9 POST
FREE.**

Finest Quality,
Specially Selected
French Calf Strop.
Best Finish. 4/6
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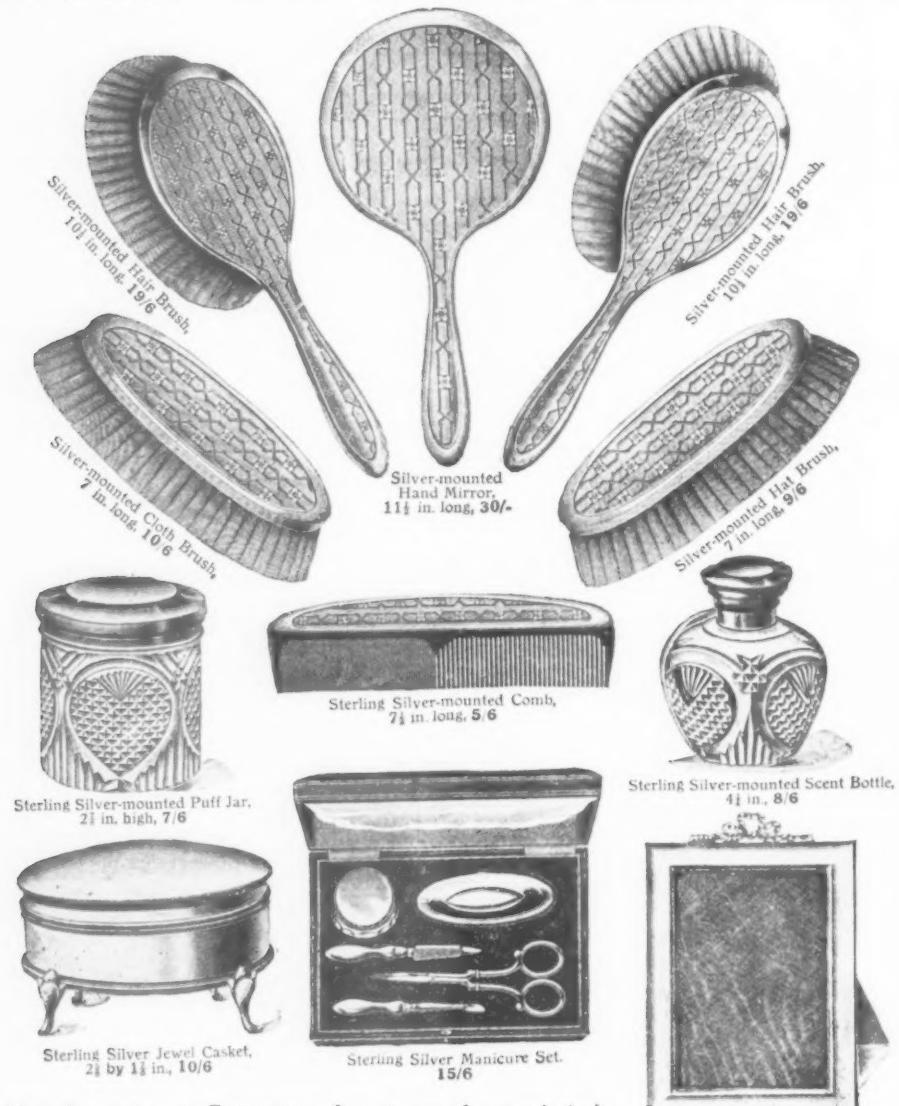
We will send
you sufficient
of the sharpener
to dress
your own strop
on receipt of
stamps value
SEVENPENCE.

Can be obtained at all
CLEMENTS' RAZOR DEPOTS:
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TO ward off the perils of cold, damp winter weather everyone needs the chest-strengthening medicine which is conveyed from a Peps tablet through the breathing tubes direct to the lungs.

Whenever a fit of sneezing, a tickling cough, or an attack of shivering gives warning of a fresh cold, take a Peps tablet from its silver wrapper and place it on the tongue. Then a novel and

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Coughs, Colds, & Bronchitis.

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JOHN BOND'S "CRYSTAL PALACE" WITH OR WITHOUT HEATING, WHICHEVER KIND IS PREFERRED.

Awarded 45 GOLD Medals and Royal Appointments for Superiority.

FREE AND ENCLOSED WITH EVERY BOTTLE A VOUCHER ENTITLING PURCHASERS TO THEIR NAME OR MONOGRAM RUBBER STAMP, WITH PAD AND BRUSH. ALSO WITH 1s. SIZE A LINER STRETCHER.

100 YEARS' WORLD-WIDE REPUTATION. Price 6d. and 1s. Sold by all Stationers, Chemists and Stores.

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PERMANENTLY REMOVED

By my Scientific Treatment, Especially Prepared for Each Individual Case.

I SUFFERED FOR YEARS with a hirsute growth of hair on my face, and tried many remedies without success, but I ultimately discovered the TRUE SECRET for the permanent removal of hair, and for more than two years have been applying my treatment to others. IF YOU ARE TROUBLED, WRITE TO ME. Being a woman, I know of the delicacy of such a matter as this, and act accordingly. Please enclose stamp to pay postage.

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The Lady's "Perth" Golf Brogue Shoe 12/-

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Free Price List No. 122 (profusely illustrated) mailed anywhere.

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Established over 100 years.

The New Way to Beauty

is vastly superior to the old, for it is simple and natural, and has a real reason. Greasy creams, cosmetics, spirits, and perfumes all kill the "life" of the skin, and in the end make beauty impossible. The new way—the Icilma way—is to stimulate the skin to healthy action, and thus restore its natural freshness.

ICILMA FLUOR CREAM—the "face cream without grease"—brings natural beauty, because it contains the wonderful tonic water from Algeria; it drives out of the skin all that makes it prematurely old, sallow, or liable to irritations from heat, cold, or seasons; it gives that soft, white skin and delicate colouring which every woman longs to keep—always.

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In Pots, Price 1/- & 1/9, everywhere.

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Genuine recipe for completely exterminating Beetles, Ants, Crickets, eggs &c. **Not** a rat to catch and only one apple necessary. **Not** a poison. Also how to keep vermin down from being and also to prevent them from attacking a house or shop or cars. Also a liquid poison to keep rats away from eating preserves. Above three recipes sent free on receipt of postal order for 1s. Money returned if not effective as stated. Please mention you saw it in THE QUIVER.

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Reclamation of Criminals, Tramps, Loafers,
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Hundreds working in parishes under Clergy.

SIXTY-SEVEN MISSION VANS con-
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Winter Work now in full progress for RELIEF OF
THE UNEMPLOYED by work only.

**For Important Announcement
see pages lxx and lxxi.**

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The Editor of "The Quiver" will receive and acknowledge any Donations or Subscriptions for the under-mentioned Charities that are forwarded to him, addressed La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.



THE NATION'S GREATEST ASSET— THE CHILDREN

THE HOMES FOR LITTLE BOYS

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have, during the past 46 years, maintained, trained, and educated

NEARLY 3,000 FATHERLESS CHILDREN.

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N.B. The Institution is heavily burdened by a Bank overdraft of £3,500.

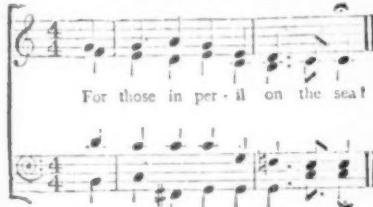
New Annual Subscriptions, Donations, and Legacies will be gratefully received and acknowledged.

EDMUND S. HANBURY, Esq., Treasurer.
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PATRON—His Majes'y the King.

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The Shipwrecked are instantly saved for on the spot and sent home.

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Settlers pour in by tens of thousands yearly, villages come into existence as if by magic, and become towns in a few months. Everything depends on what is done now. It is an unparalleled opportunity.

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Cold, Dark, Wintry Days

THE WOMEN'S SOCIAL WORK
OF
THE SALVATION ARMY.

20,000 Women and Girls influenced and helped for good **EVERY YEAR** in **57** Homes and Institutions in Great Britain.

600 OFFICERS are working on behalf of such Day and Night. No needy one is ever turned away. No matter whether she has a creed or not.

**SURELY
YOU WILL COME
TO THE HELP
OF SUCH
Self-Sacrificing
Work,
AND THUS BRING
Brightness & Joy
TO THE
POOR.**

Mrs. BRAMWELL BOOTH
Asks for your Urgent Help.

Please send to her at 259, Mare St., Hackney, London, N.E.

One Shilling

Will Feed and Clothe

One Child

for

One Day

The Orphan Working School and Alexandra Orphanage at Haverstock Hill, London, N.W., provides a Home for **500** Fatherless Children.

Will you kindly help this good work, which has been carried on by the Charity for 151 years? How many of these children will you feed and clothe for a day or more?

I shall be most grateful for your
CHRISTMAS GIFTS

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Office:—
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A Really Good Investment!!

Put Your Money into Christmas Cheer

FOR THE THOUSANDS OF POOR AND CRIPPLED BAIRNS
known to the

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION & SHAFTESBURY SOCIETY.

Everyone can take SHARES in this joy-giving scheme, and so make this Christmas the happiest season of the year.

Contributions will be carefully used and promptly acknowledged.

"THOUGH FATHER CHRISTMAS HAS A KINDLY HEART,
HE'S BOUND TO WAIT TILL **YOU** THE GIFTS IMPART."

Please send your gifts of money or kind to—

32, John Street, Theobald's Road,
London, W.C.

Sir JOHN KIRK, J.P.,
Director and Secretary.

DO IT NOW.

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Please Don't Forget the 9,044
Destitute and Orphan Children in



Dr. Barnardo's Homes

THIS

CHRISTMAS-TIDE.

Contributions urgently needed to pay the Food Bill. Mark Gifts "FOR FOOD ALONE."

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A CHRISTMAS REMINDER

THE LONDON

City Missionary is a Friend in the Homes of the People, where he daily expounds the Word of God to all and sundry who are outside the churches of this great

CITY

HOUSE-TO-HOUSE VISITATION of this kind is one of the very best and most fruitful means of reaching the hearts of the people, and for 75 years has been the distinctive feature.

MISSION

410 Missionaries Employed.

FUNDS MUCH NEEDED.

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Hackney Road,
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late a Royal Charity.

131 beds always full.

33,000 Out-Patients annually.

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System

in force for

prevention of

abuse.

Economically
Administered.

£12,000 a year expenditure.

Assured Income under £1,000.

£5,000 Attendances.

No funds in hand.

PLEASE HELP.

T. Glenton-Kerr, Sec.

Vapo-Resolene

"Cures while you sleep."

The old-fashioned method of treating diseases of the air-passages by the round-about-route of the stomach is obsolete.

The modern rational treatment is that of inhalation.



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For the treatment of

Whooping Cough, Croup, Sore Throat, Coughs, Colds, Bronchitis, Influenza, Asthma, and Catarrh,

the most effectual remedy is Vapo-Cresolene. Its soothing and healing vapours permeate the whole of the air-passages, destroy the disease germs, and give immediate relief.

Of all Chemists and Stores.

Write for booklet on the treatment of these diseases to the selling Agents:

ALLEN & HANBURY'S, LTD., LOMBARD STREET, LONDON.



Wood-Milne Rubber Heels



The busy man will find "Wood-Milnes" help him to conserve his powers, obviating all that nerve strain and jar in walking which rob so much of energy every day. The average woman, perhaps not overstrong, perhaps easily tired, will find "Wood-Milnes" save many a racking headache and many a "done-up" feeling after a heavy day "on her feet."

When buying "Wood-Milnes" remember to see the name on each heel.

Many fix "Wood-Milnes" incorrectly; the circular heel should be sunk almost flush with the leather and right at the back.

The best way is to ask the Bootmaker who supplies your "Wood-Milnes" to fix them.

"Wood-Milne" Rubber Heels are made in a variety of sizes and qualities, but every size and quality is warranted to give good service. The rubber used for "Wood-Milnes" is more resilient and more durable than that used for any other kind, which accounts for the supreme value "Wood-Milnes" offer you.



BY ROYAL WARRANT TO H.R.H. THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES

TOM SMITH'S

CRACKERS

CAUTION SEE TOM SMITH'S NAME ON EVERY BOX

CHILPRUFE FOR CHILDREN

FINEST PURE WOOL
UNSHRINKABLE



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"I have recommended the 'Chilprufe' goods to several of my friends. Those I have had have been so thoroughly satisfactory that I wish I had known of it long ago.

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Any Garment found unsatisfactory in wash or wear will be replaced FREE OF COST.

VESTS, STAYBANDS, PETTICOATS,
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SOLD BY DRAPERS AND HOSIERS.
Write for Illustrated Price List—

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EVERY SHAVE A SAFE SHAVE.

. . . It goes without saying that, for a man's comfort, nothing equals a first-class Safety Razor. The thing that keeps YOU from buying one, however, is the continual expense of new Blades.

. . . The Clemak 5/- Safety Razor Outfit consists of Triple Silver Plated Frame (beautifully finished); Self-contained Stropping Handle, and 7 Perfect Blades, made of the finest grade of Sheffield Steel, hardened and tempered by a Special Electric Process—the whole contained in a case size 2 in. by 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.

. . . The Blades of the

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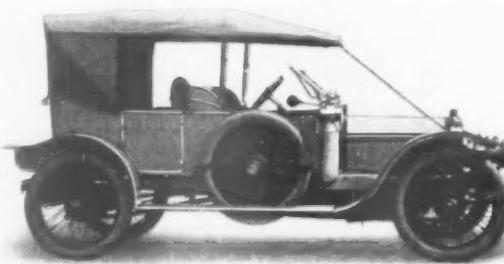
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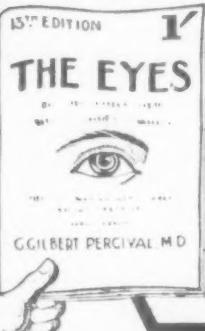
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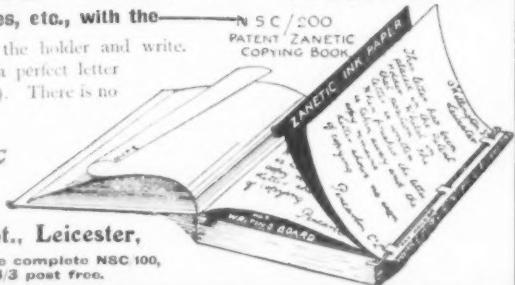
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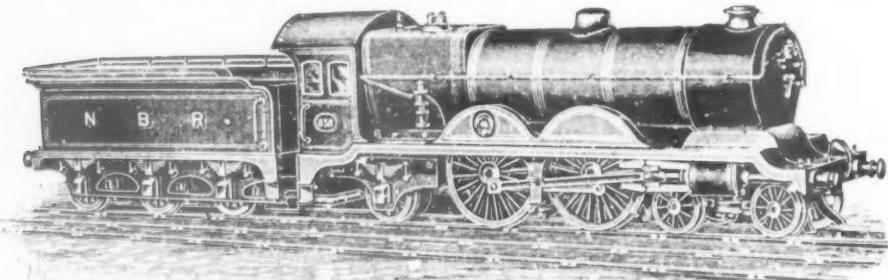
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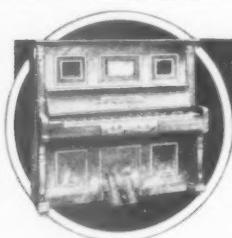
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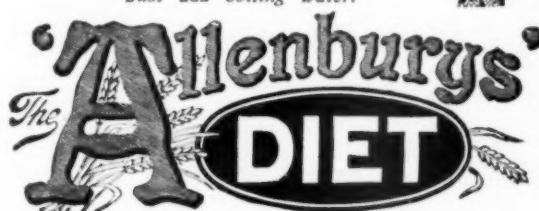
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With timely forethought the House of Cassell have come to my rescue by issuing a beautiful picture catalogue of their Books for Young Folks, which will certainly do much to prevent the discomfort I have often experienced of battling my way through a crowded bookshop, and the subsequent chagrin of a misguided, because hurried, selection. The list of authors and artists at the end will prove useful to those who have their own preference in the way of favourite authors and artists, and the Classified Index should be helpful in guiding them to books on the subjects they prefer, whether Adventure, Fairy Tales, Boys' or Girls'

Books, Popular Science, or any of the 33 subjects mentioned.

Messrs. Cassell are noted for the issue of that favourite, "Cassell's Annual," as well as the well-known monthlies, *Chums*, *The Girl's Realm*, *Little Folks*, and *Tiny Tots*, and the unique position they enjoy as publishers of these fits them for feeling the juvenile pulse and securing the services of those authors and artists who have passed that hardest of all literary criteria, the juvenile test.

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"THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR THEM IN THE INN."

(From the Painting by Lawrence Alma-Tadema.)



The QUIVER

CHRISTMAS · NUMBER

VOL. XLVI., NO. 2
(VOL. L. OLD SERIES)

DECEMBER, 1910

The Christmas Angel

A Complete Story

By ANNIE S. SWAN

(Illustrated by FRED PEGRAM)

IN a small, poor room in a City street, a woman lay dying. She was not old nor yet young, but just on the borderland betwixt youth and middle age. But much suffering had made her old before her time. She had a very sweet face lined by sorrow and care, and in her faded grey eyes dwelt an infinite pathos. They were full now as they dwelt with a mournful intensity on the face of the small quiet child sitting at the foot of the bed, playing with a rag doll. She played quietly with a subdued air, as if she realised that noise would be unsuited to the time and the place. She was a beautiful child, and though she had inhaled very little country air in her six short years of life, no harm had come to her milk-white skin.

Her eyes were blue and soft, but at times they could dance with fun, and she had that rare possession, a very merry and musical voice. Her name was Phyllis, and she was the only child of a widowed mother. That mother had a history which was partly written on her face, but it is not with the tragedy of her life we have to do, but with a certain message which the child Phyllis was called to deliver at Christmas time. It wanted but one day till Christmas Eve, and Phyllis was wondering secretly whether

Santa Claus would remember her. She had led a very simple, quiet life, and had enjoyed very few pleasures. But one thing she had never lacked, and that was love. Love is the heritage of the child, under its benign and God-like influence the child-heart blossoms and expands, until it is the most beautiful thing in the whole world. Those who wilfully or mistakenly cheat the child of its heritage of love deprive themselves of something which has no equal in the world. They lose and never find again the key to the child's heart. The heart of Phyllis had never been starved, and it was full of joyousness, of unexpected imaginings, and she was afraid of nothing, not knowing there was anything to fear.

"Go down, darling, and tell Selina I want her," said her mother presently.

"Yes, Popsy," said Phyllis obediently, and immediately slipped off the bed. She had all sorts of names for her mother, and each one represented some phase of her affection.

"And when you have sent up Selina, stop down beside her mother for a little while. I wish to speak to Selina by herself."

"Yes, Popsy," answered Phyllis as before, and walked demurely from the room. Selina's heavier foot was not long in sounding

THE QUIVER



"She played quietly with a subdued air, as if she realised that noise would be unsuited to the time and the place"—*p. 95.*

on the stairs, and she came into the room wiping her hands on the corner of her apron, which was quite clean. Selina was a slum girl, but Phyllis's mother had managed to implant in her the desire and the love of cleanliness. She was a tall, thin slip of womanhood about seventeen, with a narrow, sallow face, a somewhat receding forehead, and a pair of eyes like a dog's, large, liquid, and faithful.

"Kin I gits yer anythink, ma'am?" she asked eagerly.

"No, Selina," said Mrs. Dangerfield. "Come in and shut the door."

Selina did so, and somewhat fearfully approached the bed. Selina had in the course of her short life seen several people die, and she knew that it would not be long before Mrs. Dangerfield must obey the summons which none can set aside. It was

a heavy grief to the girl, but she had learned to bear grief in silence. Seventeen years of slum life had taught Selina the value of silence.

"Sit down here, Selina, where I can see your face. I shan't be able to see it much longer," said Alice Dangerfield quietly. "It will be all over to-night."

Selina put the corner of her apron to her eyes. It did not occur to her to contradict or try to refute the words. She knew them to be true.

"I have arranged everything with your mother, Selina. She knows where I wish to be buried, and she has the money. Tomorrow, after I am gone, I wish you to dress Phyllis in her best frock, the white one with the pink sash."

"She oughter 'ave a black 'un, ma'am," Selina volunteered respectfully, but Mrs. Dangerfield did not appear to notice the interlude.

"Take her on the Underground to Baker Street, and when you get out at Baker Street, take a cab."

"A keb? 'Ansom or four-wheeler?" said Selina briskly, abjured by the prospect.

"Anything you like, my dear, the fare will be eighteenpence; there it is." She took a small scrap of paper from under her pillow and handed it to the girl.

"Arf a crown, and they never 'as no chinge, kebbies knows better."

"You'll change it on the Underground, stupid, and tell him to drive you to twenty-one, Charles Street, Mayfair. Will you remember it?"

"Twenty-one, Chawles Street, ma'am. I shan't furgit it."

"Won't you write it down?"

"Couldn't read it ef I did. I shan't furgit, ma'am. Wot then?"

"Ring the bell and ask for Colonel Dangerfield."

"Ring the bell and ast fer Colonel Dangerfield, ma'am. Yus, wot next?"

"If he isn't at home, ask for Mrs. Dangerfield, and say you have to wait until either of them comes. They are the uncle and aunt of Phyllis, and I hope they will give her a home!"

THE CHRISTMAS ANGEL

"Oh, among the toffs," said Selina dejectedly, "an' we never sees the blessid hangel no more. Crooil 'ard, I call it, ma'am, astin yer pardin'; but so it is."

"I hope that you will not be parted from her. I have written a letter for Mrs. Dangerfield. Do you see that bag on the dressing-table? It is to be delivered as it is into the hands of Colonel Dangerfield or his wife."

"Yes'm, an' supposin' none of them is at 'ome, do I wait or leave Miss Phyllis?"

"Leave her, she will make herself at home. When she is once inside of the house I am not afraid of them sending her away again."

She closed her eyes exhausted, and Selina, with every word engraven on her faithful heart, ran to get a cup of tea, her unfailing panacea for every woe of the body or the soul. But it failed to act this time, and it happened that next day Selina took the journey which had been mapped out for her, carefully following every detail, not the smallest of which she had forgotten. Phyllis did not understand death. She had cried when her mother would not speak to her, but the novelty of sleeping in another room with Selina on the floor beside her cot took away the sting. God has willed it so. If the child had to bear the burden of later years, if griefs remained, then the world would become so dreary a place that we should all beg to be removed from it. Phyllis realised nothing; she was at the stage when the new and the untried possess a potent charm.

She had sometimes been on the Underground, but never in a hansom. Her excitement when they climbed into one at Baker Street station was intense. Her eyes, twin stars of blue, simply glowed, and her small round face was pink with excitement. She was very quiet, however, a kind of solemn awe seemed to envelop her.

"Where am I going, Selina, and why are we in a cab?" she demanded with that slight imperiousness which instantly demanded and received homage.

"To see yer hant an' huncle, Miss Phyllis; toffs they are. A reel colonel—oh my!"

"What's a toff and what's a colonel?" demanded Phyllis calmly.

"A toff's a swell, money, big 'ouse, fust-claws grub," said Selina with a dramatic wave of her hand. "A colonel in the harmy wears a red coat fur chice, an' a sword, likewise fights, wen theer's fightin' goin', or sees thet the Tommies do—that's a colonel, yer huncle, darlin', don'tcher furgit it!"

Phyllis did not seem much impressed. They were driving through the park at the moment, and her eyes were roaming over its green spaces with a species of wonder and delight. It was the first time Phyllis had been in the big park, and it enchanted her. Selina became less talkative as they approached Charles Street, Mayfair. Great would have been her ire had she been aware that their cabman had of a set purpose taken them by a circuitous route. It made no difference, however, to the eighteen-penny fare, which she held convulsively



"'Not at 'ome,' said James, pompously"—p. 98.

THE QUIVER

clasped in her warm moist hand, and which she dispensed in a lordly manner to him when he drew up at the proper number, and let them down. When he proceeded with considerable embroidery to explain that he required another sixpence, Selina merely gave a knowing wink, said, "We *don't* think," and turned her back on him.

She grasped the hand of her little charge tightly in hers, and rang the bell. Her heart was very near her mouth when she realised that here she had to leave the child, who was the very apple of her eye. She had Mrs. Dangerfield's letter wrapped in a clean pocket-handkerchief in the capacious pocket of her jacket, but she would not withdraw it until the necessary moment. A footman opened the door, and stared unrestrainedly at the pair on the doorstep. It may be said at once that he curled his lip at Selina, who bore the unmistakable stamp of the East End, from whence James himself had originally sprung.

"We wants to see the colonel now, ef yer please, if 'e's in the 'ouse," said Selina, with an air of dignity, and not in the least put out by the smart appearance of the fine gentleman who awaited her business.

"Not at 'ome," said James, pompously.

"You story-teller! There 'e is! I could bet me boots," she said, peering beyond him into the hall, where a tall figure had at that moment appeared through one of the open doors.

"Young woman askin' for you, sir," said James in his well-trained voice, "Young woman, and—and small lady."

The colonel often smiled afterwards at James's hesitation and ultimate choice of word—and sometimes when he wished to tease Phyllis, he would address her as "small lady." He came forward, wearing his overcoat and carrying his gloves in his hand, looking rather stern and somewhat puzzled.

"My good girl, what do you want?" he said, addressing Selina, but keeping his eyes on the child's face. Its haunting sweetness pursued him. He wondered where he could have seen it before. He did not grasp the fact that it was in the land of long ago—when he and his little sister in pinafores had played in the green spaces of Hursl Park.

"Carn't we come in, sir?" inquired Selina, ingratiatingly. "This is Miss Phyllis, an' 'ere's the letter explainin'."

The colonel indicated that they could come in, and they were ushered into a pretty morning-room in which a clear fire burned, and which was sweet with the scent of hot-house blooms.

With much elaboration, and some heavy breathing, Selina managed to extract the letter from the handkerchief, and held it out to the colonel. His face altered somewhat as his eyes fell on the handwriting, which he recognised, though he had not seen it for many years.

"This letter is addressed to my wife," he said a little stiffly, and made no effort to open it.

"Ain't she at 'ome, sir? Anyways, Mrs. Dangerfield said I was to leave Miss Phyllis. You'll stop, won't you, dear, in this nice place, among all them pretty flowers?"

Phyllis had a very solemn face, but there was no fear in her eyes. "If you stop too, Selina," she said, with an air of propriety and dignity which filled the colonel with admiration.

"Perhaps you will kindly explain who you are, and what you want here, my good girl. My wife is not at home. I will give her the letter when she comes back."

"The letter's on'y abart me," said Selina cheerfully. "I'm to tell abart Miss Phyllis meself. 'Er ma's dead."

"Who is her mother?"

"I dunno, but you're 'er huncle, see. Colonel Dangerfield, number twenty-one, Chawles Street, Mayfair, ain't yer, sir?"

"That is certainly my name. What is yours, my dear?" he asked, still pursued by the sweet familiarity of the child's looks.

"I'm Phyllis; mummy won't speak to me no more. Selina says she's gone to heaven. And please I've come to live here now."

The colonel gave a great start, and once more looked at Selina, who thereupon proceeded to explain in her brusque, graphic way, without unnecessary or superfluous words, what she knew of the case.

The colonel's ruddy face grew a little white as he listened.

"How long has Mrs. Dangerfield lived at the house where you come from?" he asked, seeming to find his words with difficulty.

"Two years," answered Selina. "Miss Phyllis, she was such a little thing when they comed. She's grown a treat, sir.

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D'yer think as 'ow the lidy will be long? I want to knows whether I kin stop too, Miss Phyll, she'd miss me o' nites puttin' 'er to bed."

The colonel was not lavish of his words. He stood with the still closed letter in his hand, looking from one to another, and suddenly he broke the seal and read the few words written within. Then his lips twitched, and he rang the bell. The decorous James instantly appeared, and was requested to

tell Mrs.

Soames, the

housekeeper, to

attend upon

her master in

the morning-

room. Mrs.

Soames was a

stately indi-

vidual, wear-

ing a black

frock and a

prim lace

collar, and she

had a small

and very fas-

cinating green

wicker basket

in her hand

filled up with

keys, all shin-

ing and clean,

as if they were

very much and

very often used.

"Oh, Mrs.

Soames," said

the colonel,

with the air of

a man accus-

ted to command, "this is my niece,

Miss Phyllis Dangerfield, and—and the young

person in charge of her. Take them both to

your room and see that they have something

to eat, and keep them there until your mis-

trress returns from the City. Then give this

letter to her ladyship, and tell her they are

here."

"Yes, sir," said Mrs. Soames, and if she were surprised she suffered no hint of it to appear. She glanced with a curious flutter of the lids at the grotesque figure of Selina, but when her gaze fell on the sweet face of

the child, with its frame of golden hair, her eyes instantly softened. Soames was an old friend and retainer of the Dangerfields, and she often said that the curse of the house was its childlessness. She knew how bad things were going at the moment between her master and mistress; echoes of the friction in the drawing-room reached the servants' hall, and the difference of yesterday had been more acute than usual. It had destroyed the Christmas flavour; indeed, there was none in the house.

"Yes, sir, I'll take them to my room, and when my lady comes home, I'll give her the letter, and tell her Miss—Miss—"

"Phyllis," put in the colonel.

"Miss Phyllis and the young person are here."

"And that nothing is to happen until I come in to lunch. Do you hear, Soames? They are to stay here, and nothing is to happen until I come back to lunch."

"Yes, sir, very well, sir.

Will you come with me, Miss Phyllis?" she said, bending her austere but kind eyes on the child's face.

"Presently," said Phyllis, still keeping her eyes on her uncle's face. She had, indeed, been studying him intently since the moment she had entered the room, and now seemed to make up her mind. She stepped forward with the little bounding step which made one expect to see her dance the next moment, and held up her face to be kissed. The next moment she was lifted high in a pair of strong arms, and the



"She has been a kind of Christmas angel to us" — p. 101.

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face pressed to hers was wet with tears. These signs of emotion did not escape Selina, and the satisfaction in her eyes was unbounded. She felt that she was engineering the matter very well. The little procession departed, and the colonel, drawing on his gloves and putting on his hat, passed through the door which James decorously opened for him. At the moment, the electric brougham glided up to the kerb, and James would have darted forward to wait upon his mistress, but his master detained him with a wave of the hand. His face set, and he stepped forward and spoke through the open window.

"Can you spare me an hour, Winifred?" he asked, and something in his voice struck strangely upon the woman who listened. Her fair face, marble-white and set in hard lines, slightly relaxed, as she leaned forward.

"What for?" she asked rather sharply.

"If you can spare the hour, and will let me come in, I shall explain as we go," he said shortly. She nodded, and opening the door he stepped in, after giving to the chauffeur what seemed to that gentleman an impossible address. Indeed he had to ask for its repetition.

The door shut with a little click, the car was turned, and glided smoothly away. Husband and wife had met for the first time that day, and Winifred Dangerfield's morning outing had been to her family lawyer in the City. But they did not allude to that subject; indeed, they remained in absolute silence, until presently she glanced through the window to the throng of the traffic on the bridge which crossed the Thames.

"Where are you taking me to?" she asked then.

"If you will wait," he answered with a kind of cold gentleness, "I can tell you better, perhaps, as we come back."

She shrugged her shoulders, sat back in the car, and closed her eyes. Once or twice he glanced at her oddly with a faintly yearning look. Once these two had loved one another, but slowly a wall of indifference and pride had grown up between them, until one at least had felt that continuance of the dual life was impossible. Yet tomorrow was Christmas Day and the spirit of goodwill and peace was hovering wistfully over them, putting into their hearts thoughts of the long ago time, of happier

days, of memories that made a bond between them. Yet neither would speak.

Presently the car turned with a jerk which seemed to protest into a quiet dull street on the Surrey side, set back from a grimy and noisy thoroughfare, a poor mean street, where light and air seemed to be grudgingly given.

"Here we are, Winifred, I have brought you to see a dead woman," he said when they stopped at a certain door. "I ought to apologise, perhaps, but something made me. It is my poor sister-in-law, Alice, my brother Fred's wife."

"Alice Dangerfield here, dead, Herbert!" she repeated in a voiceless whisper. "It is impossible! How long have you known that she was here?"

"I heard it only to-day. I thought she was still in Francisco. That is the kind of woman Alice was. She has lived here, unknown and uncomplaining, for two years."

The chauffeur stood slightly supercilious at the door of the car. The colonel waved him back to his seat, where he glared at the small but ever-increasing crowd of children who, attracted by the unusual sight, began to line up for inspection. The colonel rang the bell, and Selina's mother, merely a larger edition of her daughter, appeared and received them without perturbation or excitement. She knew where Selina had gone, and it in no way surprised her that her lodger should have fine relations. It needed no special discernment to know that she was not of the clay usually found in Beaumont Terrace, Kennington.

They passed up the stairs to the room where the blind was drawn down, and entered it alone. Mrs. Gedge had done her best to make the room a fitting resting-place for the poor worn figure of Alice Dangerfield. It was all decently clean, and in a white milk jug a penny bunch of chrysanthemums stood on the little table by the bed.

The face was startlingly sweet, and so real and peaceful that Winifred drew back, almost expecting the lips to move.

"Oh, Bert!" she said in a trembling whisper, "she isn't dead! She's going to speak. I'm sure she's looking at us!"

She laid her trembling hand on his arm, and his hand closed over it and held it, and neither seemed to notice.

"Poor, poor Alice! She never had a day's happiness; but she never grumbled;

THE CHRISTMAS ANGEL

she never spoke a hard word. Things were always well for her even when they were at their worst. If only I had known that she was in London. We could have spared something for her. She could have gone to Hurst, Winnie. The place you dislike so much would have been heaven to her."

"We'll bury her there, Bert. Take me away. I can't bear it! I'm a wicked woman."

She hastened down the stairs and back to the car, silently weeping, leaving him to obtain some further particulars from Mrs. Gedge, and to leave instructions for certain people to be sent to him at Charles Street that very afternoon.

"There is more to tell, Winnie," said the colonel when he re-entered the car, and neither noticed that in the stress of the moment they had slipped back into the names which they had used in happier times. "She has left a little girl the image of Fred. The likeness is ridiculous!"

"Then where is she? Let us go back and get her. She can't possibly be left there."

"She's at Charles Street," he answered, and in a few moments acquainted her with the event of the morning. She made very little comment, but the moment the car stopped at the familiar green door, she darted into the house and up to the housekeeper's room. She opened the door softly, and a pretty picture met her view. Lying full length on the hearthrug was Phyllis, with Tabitha, Mrs. Soames' old grey cat, for a pillow, her arms tightly round its soft body, and her cheek against it. Selina sat on the edge of a chair awkwardly. When Lady Winifred entered the room she rose and dropped an awkward curtsey. There was something compelling about the slight, slim figure in its soft sables, but somehow Selina did not feel in the least afraid.

"Git up, me darlint, 'er ladyship 'as comed."

Phyllis sprang up at command, and turned her big, innocent eyes full upon her aunt's face. Then when the arms slowly opened, and a voice vibrating with tenderness said, "You darling!" she walked into them and found another mother's breast for her baby head.

It was a long time before Colonel Danger-

field saw his wife again, and then it was unexpected. He was sitting in his study trying to give attention to his book, when the door opened softly and she glided in.

"Phyllis has gone to bed, Herbert. She would like to see you," she said awkwardly. "I said I would bring you up."

"All right," he said, and rose to his feet. They looked at one another a trifle oddly for a moment, then Winifred gave a little awkward laugh.

"It is Christmas Eve, Herbert, and we have nothing to put in Phyllis's stocking. I was thinking, would you mind taking me out before dinner—I have put it off till nine o'clock—and we could buy something for her. Some of the shops keep open quite late, Soames tells me."

"Yes, I'll take you, Winnie; bless you for the thought. Then you won't think the child an intruder? She may stop?"

She took a step towards the door, and then hesitated, as if not sure of her words.

"It has happened very awkwardly; we can't do anything to-morrow as it is Christmas Day. But on Wednesday we can go to Hurst Park, can't we, all together?"

The colour rose in his face.

"You would go to Hurst Park of your own free will, Winifred? How much or how little would that mean?"

"It may mean just as much or as little as you like, Herbert. I—I am sorry—"

The end of her sentence did not come; and the next moment her head was on her husband's breast, and she was sobbing out her contrition for all the misunderstanding and the bitterness of the past year.

Phyllis fell asleep waiting for her kind uncle to come; and was quite unconscious later of the two figures bending over her with such tenderness, of the kind hands filling her stocking to the brim.

"We must always keep her, Herbert. She has been a kind of Christmas angel to us," whispered Lady Winifred when all was done, and they still lingered as if loth to leave the bright head and sweet, flushed, childish face on the pillow. But though Herbert Dangerfield drew his wife closer to his side, he was thinking of the dead woman in the poor little room on the Surrey side, who in her passing had done the Christmas angel's work.





THE COMING OF THE SNOW

(With Photo studio by A. B. WILSON.)

THE sun in summer, and the snow in winter—what a grace there is in things happening as they should. In England natural perversity too often makes us light our fires in August, and take the air in December, yet we shall always dream of a "good old-fashioned Christmas" as a time of ice and snow, and creaking windows and howling winds.

The first fall of snow! What an absolute delight it is! For a week past the skies have been grey and sullen; there is a nasty snap in the air. Yester morning there was a distinct reluctance of poor frail flesh to face the morning plunge. Last night tell it not in Gath'—a hot-water bottle found its way surreptitiously up to the bedroom. This morning the dim haze of late dawn reveals that miracle of nature—the newly fallen snow.

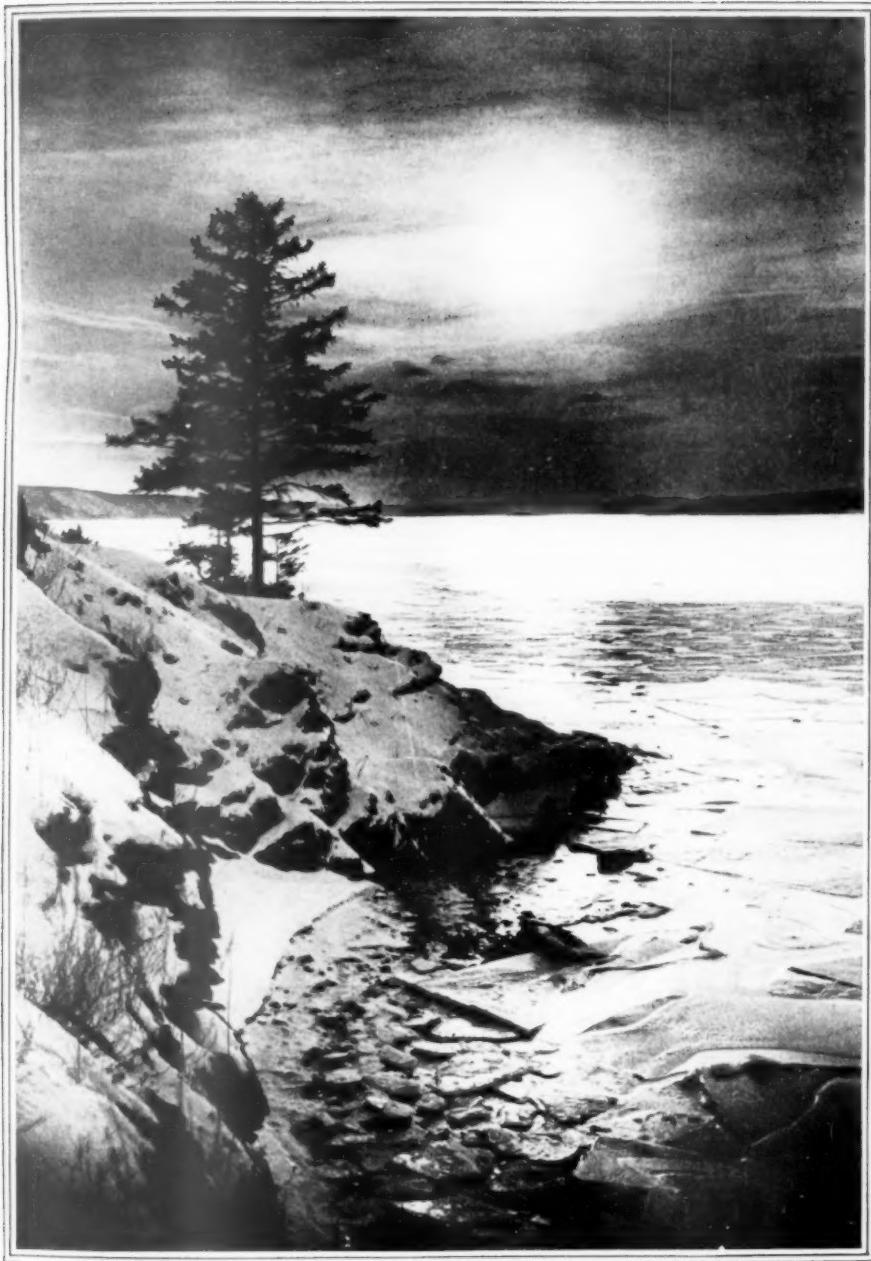
Already it has begun to melt on house-top and gravel-path; the lake at the end of the lawn shows only the thinnest of ice wafers here and there, but shrubs and trees present a perfect fantasy of jewelled tracings.

There is a strange silence thrown over the street traffic, broken by the crunch of some passer's tread, or the spade of a diligent householder. In a few short hours, maybe, the spell will be broken, and then—*the slush!*

But for the coming of the snow go to some northern clime such as Norway, where, for long months, the white carpet is spread out over field, forest, and hill. There is the charm of novelty about its coming, but nothing of uncertainty about its staying: good, real, crisp snow—beautiful and lasting. The black mountain lakes slumber under the cold bright crust, the water-courses and steep waterfalls sob under the swollen ice, whilst the scene is lit up with the bright far-distant sun, casting around it blue shadows, or by the white moon, or by the Northern Lights, with their play of fireworks in ever-changing beams of brightness.

The accompanying pictures give some idea of the rare witchery of the snow in northern climes, but they can hardly even suggest the exhilaration of the winter air. While snow and ice give the ground and plants a strengthening sleep, there is more animation and energy among the people. The eye sparkles, and the heart beats with quickened pulse. The swift, mad dash through the air on skis or sleighs brings to the cheek a healthier glow than ever summer sun could give it. The cold, crisp, bracing air expands the chest, clears and animates the brain.

Summer suns are all very well in their way, but there are few charms to beat snowtime in the great North lands.

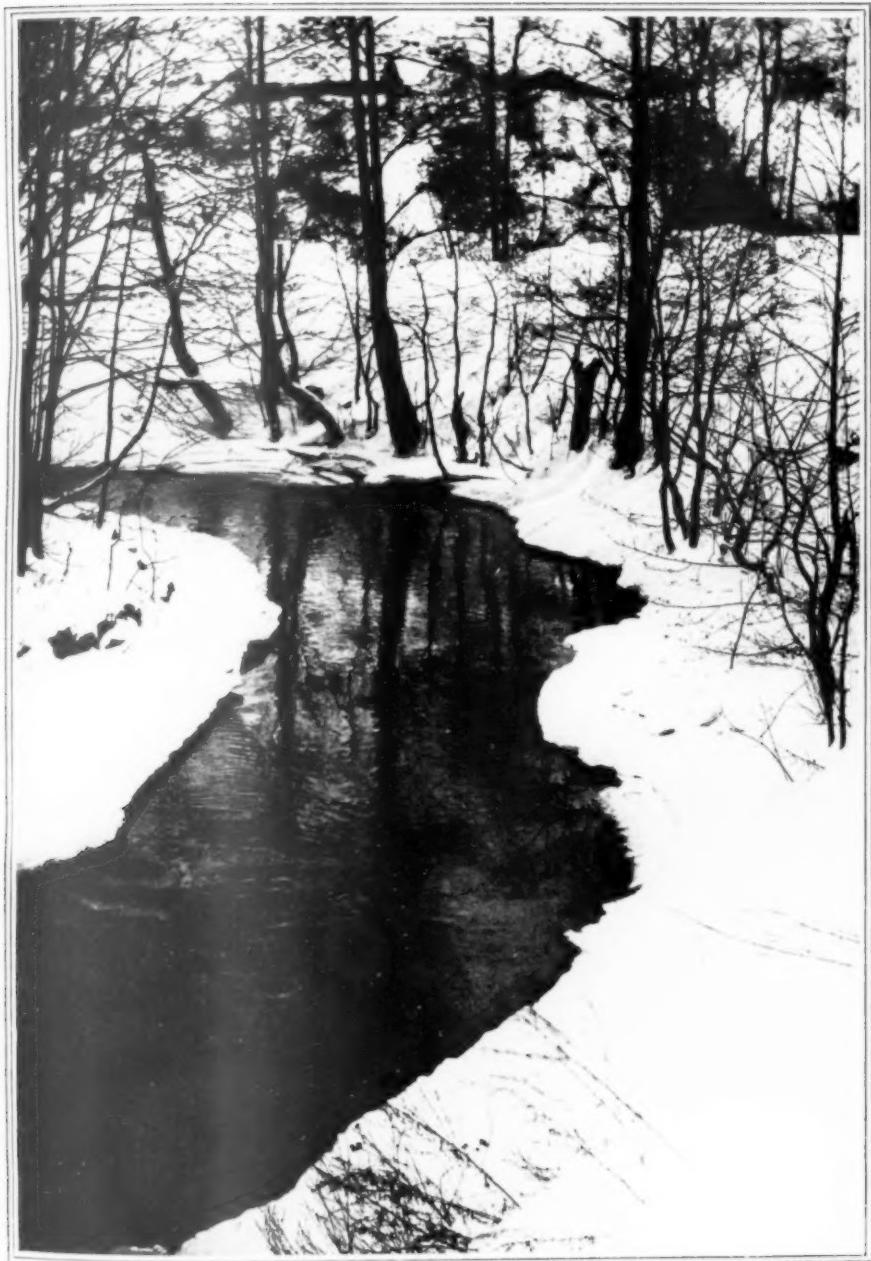


"See, Winter comes to rule the varied year,
Sullen and sad."

THOMSON.



"O Nature! a' thy shows and forms
To feeling, pensive hearts hac charms,
Whether the summer kindly warms
Or winter haws."



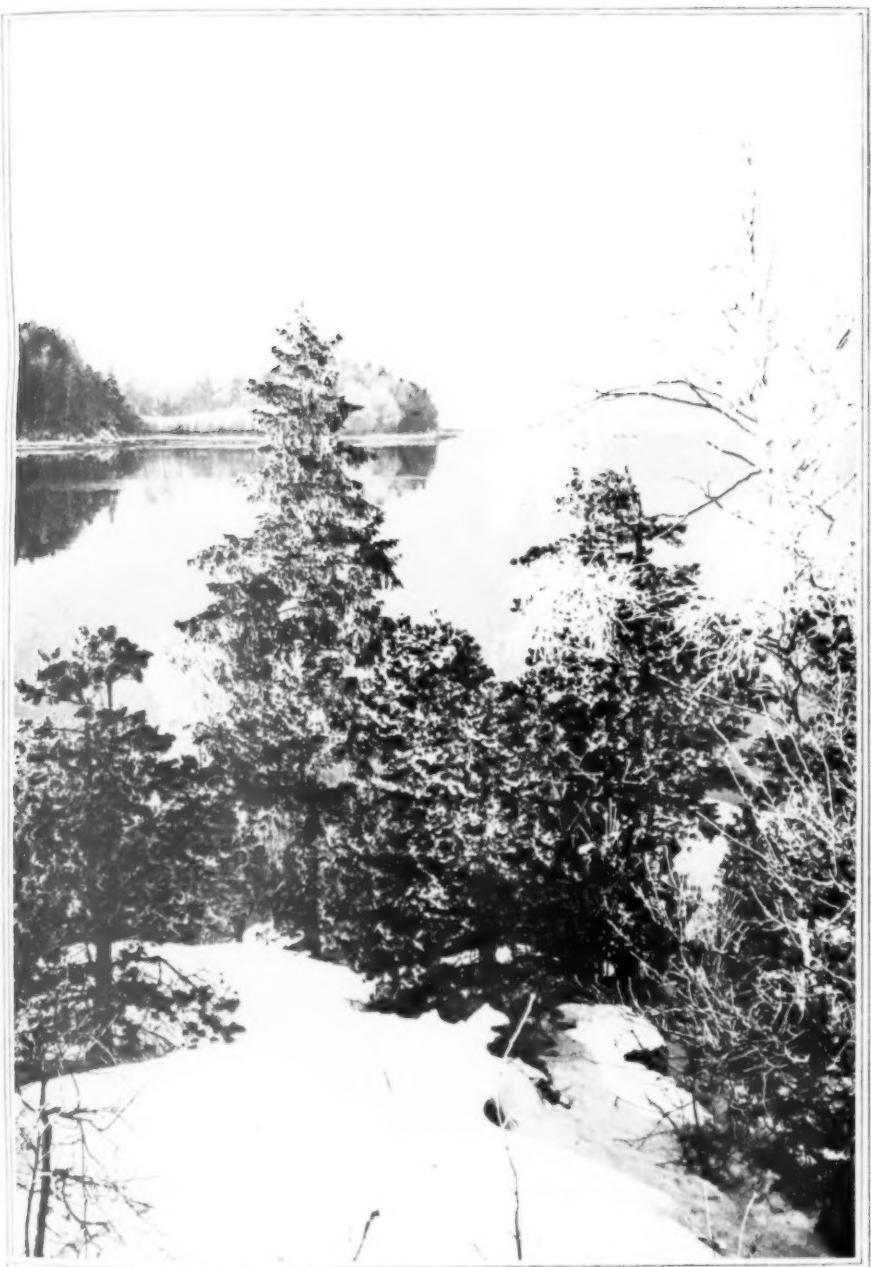
"A clear, united stream
By care unruffled." *T. H. Hopper*



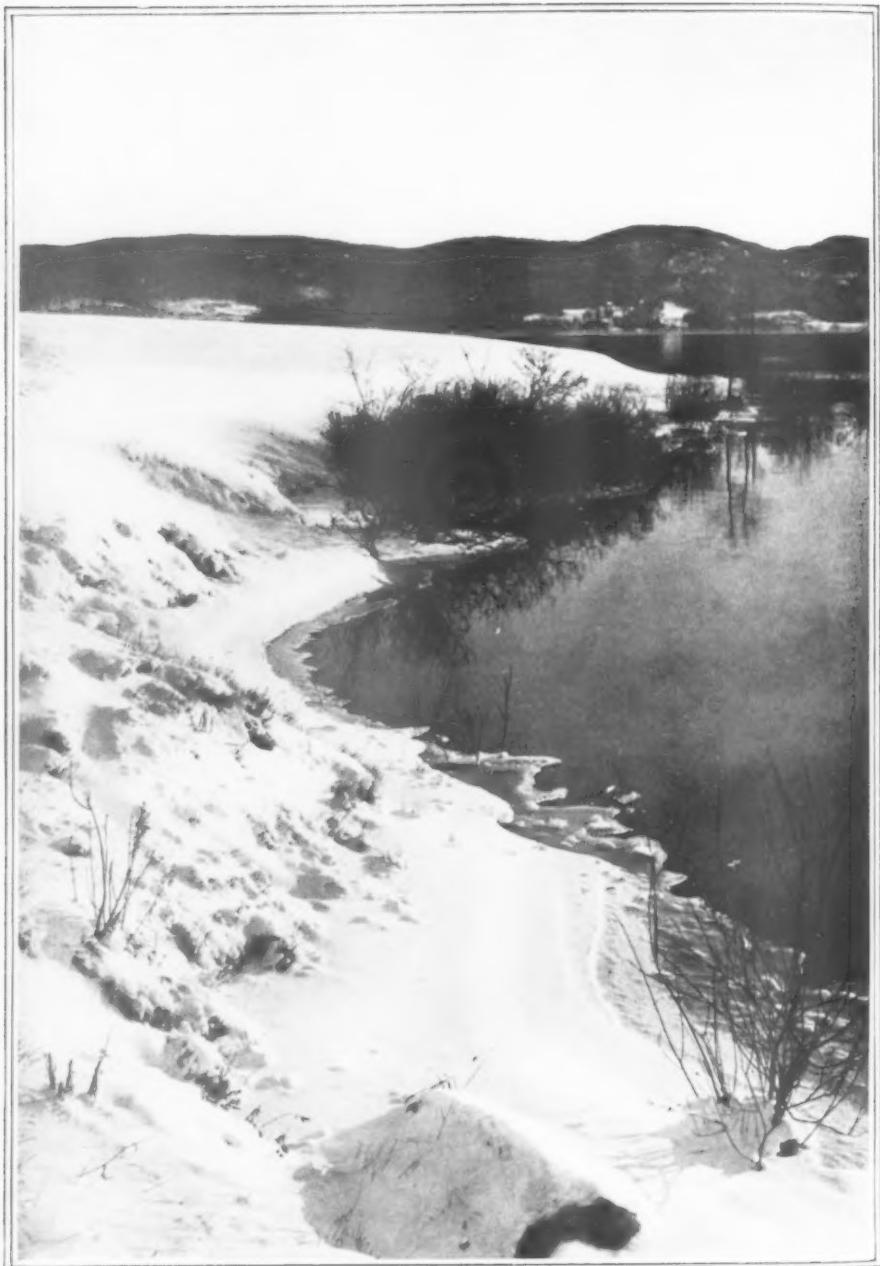
"The frolic architecture of the snow." —
THOMAS H.



"The day is done, and the darkness
falls from the wings of night." —
THOMAS H.



"Nature's own sweet and cunning hand."
SIR ARTHUR RUSSELL



"The after silence on the shore"
By B. H. B.

Auntie's Idols

A Christmas Story

By KATE SEATON

(Illustrated by BALLIOL SALMON.)

I

THE dull, murky, December sky had done nothing but pour down a steady drizzle of rain since early morning, and to little Birdie, usually so gay and bright, the day had seemed unutterably long.

She had been left, as usual, in the charge of Mrs. Warner, the kindly occupant of the flat below, but who to-day had proved herself a companion so lacking in imagination as to be unable even to "p'etend" that the couch was a train, bearing herself and Birdie out into a land of sunshine and flowers.

And now, though both mother and Auntie Mollie were at home, the evening promised to be almost as dull and quiet as the long dreary day had been.

Birdie—so called because of a certain bird-like way she had of looking out at you from beneath a mass of soft curls, her small brown head tilted on one side—sat on a hassock, quietly turning over the pages of her picture book. But her little mind was busy with other and more perplexing problems than the Old Woman's piggy that wouldn't go over the stile—illustrated in bright, glaring colours on the page before her.

Suddenly a slight noise from an adjoining room attracted the child's attention. She gave a glance at the motionless figure of her mother, reclining on the couch, with pale face and closed eyes; then dropped her book flat upon the smiling face of her favourite rag doll, and stole quietly towards the door whence the noise had come. She knew that sound of old. It was the peculiar thud made by the lid of Auntie Mollie's big chest—the miscellaneous contents of which were a never-ending source of delight to Birdie.

With a pleased smile of anticipation she pushed open the door of the room, then paused—her eyes growing round with wonder. For there, in front of the open

chest, knelt Auntie Mollie, holding in her hands a pair of carved ebony figures. They were only small, but their eyes, formed of two blood-red stones, gave to the grotesque faces an almost sinister expression, while the middle of each wrinkled forehead displayed a pure white stone, which, as it caught the gaslight, flashed with a wonderful brilliance.

The kneeling girl caught her breath sharply, and bowing her head against the small quaint figures, uttered a low sol, quite unconscious of the tiny, reproachful watcher.

Birdie had seen those "black dollies" once before, but her request to be allowed to play with them had been met with a firm refusal, and she had been informed that "Auntie's Idols" were too precious to be played with. Further questioning on her part had elicited the puzzling explanation that idols were little gods that naughty people, who didn't know any better, knelt down before and worshipped, instead of praying to the "Gentle Shepherd," to Whom her nightly verse was lisped.

In spite of her sweet, cherubic appearance, Birdie was sometimes accused of being "naughty"; but never before had she suspected Auntie Mollie of such tendencies. Yet, here she was, praying to little black gods, just like those naughty people whose idolatrous propensities had been held up before her as something to be shunned.

Recovering from her surprise, she crossed the room and solemnly laid a dimpled hand on the idolater's shoulder.

"Auntie Mollie, is 'oo p'aying to dose 'ickle idols to send 'oo somefin'?" she asked reprovingly.

The girl sprang to her feet with a nervous little laugh, and, thrusting the figures into a soft-lined case, said unsteadily:

"Yes, Birdie. Auntie's idols are going to bring Mummie a new coat, to keep the naughty winds away!"

Instantly Birdie was all interest—her

THE QUIVER

sense of the enormity of her Auntie's conduct swallowed up in the thought of mother's prospective gain.

"A—a nice nasty one?" she asked, breathlessly, "like Mrs. Warner's, wiv soft pussy-fur inside?"

"Yes; just like that," responded the girl, smiling down at the eager little face.

"An' one for 'oo, too?" pursued Birdie, anxiously.

"Oh, no. I can do without. If the idols will only bring one for—" The girl paused, conscious that she was betraying her secret to the tiny questioner.

"Birdie not tell Mummie, will you, darling?" she said earnestly. "Auntie Mollie wants it to be a pleasant surprise for Christmas."

The child shook her little brown head vigorously.

"No," she agreed; "Birdie s'prise muvver."

Then, remembering that a request for a real live pony, which she had added on her own account to her usual nightly verse, had not been granted, she went on, with sudden doubt: "But will 'oor idols div' 'oo a toat for Mummie?"

"I think they'll bring more than a coat, Birdie," rejoined Mollie, who was now hastily pinning on her hat—too preoccupied to give a thought to the possible encouragement to idolatrous tendencies in her little niece. "Now run back to Mummie, darling, and be sure you don't tell Auntie's secret!"

"No; Birdie not tell Auntie be naughty, sayin' p'ayers to b'ack idols," responded the child, mysteriously.

The girl laughed, and catching her up in her arms, kissed her tenderly.

"What a funny little darling you are, Birdie!" she said, softly.

Carefully hiding the little case beneath her coat, Mollie Chalmers presently left the house, and after a short tram-ride, stood hesitatingly before a low, old-fashioned shop-window, trying to gain courage to enter.

At last she made the venture, and as she timidly stepped within, a Jewish-looking man came smilingly forward, with smooth, deferential manner, which underwent a subtle change as he perceived that she had come to sell, not to buy.

"I—I want to know what you can offer

me for these figures?" began Mollie, nervously unwrapping the small case. "They—they were given to my father by an Indian gentleman, in recognition of some service he had rendered him, and—I believe, are really valuable. The stones are—"

"Mere ordinary Indian brilliants," broke in the man, shortly, "worth no more than glass."

"Oh, I'm sure you are mistaken!" said Mollie earnestly.

An elderly gentleman, leaning over a case on the farther side, looked up suddenly at the sound of the girl's voice, and as his eyes fell upon the two figures she held, he started and half moved forward.

"I'll give you thirty shillings for the two," said the dealer, curtly. "That's taking a risk; for though the carving is good, there's no demand for this kind of thing, and I shall probably have them left on my hands."

"Thirty shillings!" gasped Mollie in dismay. "Is—is that the most you can offer?"

"Certainly. I think I am very generous to offer you so much."

Another customer entering at that moment, the "generous" dealer left poor Mollie helplessly fingering the small images, upon which she had set such great store, and the disposal of which was to have accomplished so much.

As she stood undecided, she became suddenly conscious of a voice at her elbow, speaking in cautious tones:

"Don't you let him have them at such a ridiculous price. The figures are really valuable."

Mollie turned in surprise, and catching a meaning glance from the eyes of the elderly gentleman, now standing by her side, began slowly replacing the figures in their small case.

"That's right," whispered the stranger in a relieved tone; and taking out a slip of paper, he hurriedly scribbled a few words and pushed it towards the bewildered girl. "If you take them to that address, and ask for—Mr. Smithson, he would, I feel sure, offer you a fair price for them."

Mollie gave her kindly adviser a quick, searching glance, and had only just time to murmur her thanks, when the dealer returned.



"There, in front of the open chest, knelt Auntie Mollie, holding in her hands a pair of carved ebony figures"—*p. 109.*

"Well? Decided to accept my offer?" he asked, with a well-assumed air of indifference.

"No," said Mollie firmly. "I must have time to think over it. Good-evening."

And before the disappointed man had time to recover from his surprise, the girl had hurried from the shop.

II

THE following day, Mollie sat poring over an old book, in the Egyptology Section of the British Museum, carefully copying extracts for her employer, and striving at the same time to keep a watchful eye on Birdie, demurely intent on her own childish book, where Mother Goose

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was depicted giving playful chase to a sportive bunny. Involuntarily Mollie smiled at the ludicrous contrast between that and her own dry volume.

Presently Birdie came to the end of her book, and wriggling down from her seat, began solemnly pacing between the tables with her old rag doll. The prospect of spending the day in the City with Auntie Mollie had greatly excited and delighted the child; but this tedious hour in the big room of the British Museum was something she had not bargained for. There were other rooms—as she knew from previous visits—far more interesting and amusing than this, containing all manner of strange, funny-looking things, which had greatly aroused her curiosity and delight. Why had Auntie Mollie not chosen one of these?

Birdie stopped in her walk as a sudden idea seized her—an idea which grew in magnitude and importance as she pondered it.

She glanced at Auntie Mollie's bowed head and grave, absorbed face, and sighed. It was no use speaking to *her*—she was too busy to be interrupted. Birdie would just have to find it herself—the room through which they had hurried that morning, where sat that awesome figure, which, big though it was, her Auntie had assured her was just an idol, too, the same as those small black ones before which she had surprised her Auntie in the act of kneeling the night before.

After another glance at Mollie's absorbed face, Birdie set off, full of her project; but—the big rooms looked so bewilderingly alike to the little maiden, and she felt so terribly lonely amongst so many strange objects, that her purpose was beginning to weaken.

She had paused irresolutely in an open doorway, and was meditating a speedy return, when, half-way down the long room, her eye caught the object of her search. She looked at the figure earnestly, then gave a wistful glance round. It would have felt comforting to see another human being besides herself in the big, solemn-looking room, with so many weird-looking objects all round; the sense of companionship would have given her courage to face the grim idol, sitting there in tailor fashion, so imperturbably complacent and calm.

At last, with an effort, she gathered up her courage, and darting suddenly down the room, dropped, like a small round ball of red, before the large image of a Hindoo god, greatly to the surprise of a grey-haired man quietly examining an ancient piece of carving at the far side of the room.

The little red hood fell back from Birdie's brown, curly head, as she raised her hands in solemn supplication.

"P'ease, Mr. Idol," she began, breathlessly, "will 'oo div my Auntie Mollie a nice nesty toat—'ike the one 'oor ickle baby idols are doing to div Mumimie? An' p'ease—"

The child paused and glanced timidly up at the grave, impassive face. Surely, she argued, if the little baby idols could grant *one* request, this great big idol might be persuaded to grant *two*. But—it was one thing to be naughty and pray to the idol on behalf of Auntie Mollie, and quite another to ask for something on her own behalf. Then, as the vision of that lovely Christmas tree she had seen displayed in a shop-window that morning, with its gorgeous display of glittering balls and toys, came back to her, she suddenly made her resolve and finished desperately:

"An' p'ease, Mr. Idol, Birdie would 'ike a weal Tissmas twec, wiv silver balls an' tandles."

After a solemn "Amen," the child rose and glanced fearfully up at the graven image.

"The young idolater!" exclaimed the unseen watcher, under his breath.

But already Birdie's conscience was at work, and as she looked at the motionless figure, and recalled some of her mother's allusions to "naughty people who worshipped idols," a sudden panic seized her, and springing up quickly she turned for flight—distress and terror in the bright, brown eyes.

Perceiving her fright, the man hurried towards her, and as the child caught sight of him, she flew to meet him with outstretched hands.

"There, there! Is the little idolater frightened already?" he asked tenderly, as he drew her into his arms.

The child nestled against him for a few moments, sobbing quietly; then she raised a tearful flushed face to his, and said solemnly:

AUNTIE'S IDOLS

"I'se wicked ! Birdie's vewy wicked ! "

Gently soothing the distressed child, the gentleman carried her out of sight of the disturbing image, and seated himself in an adjoining room, where Birdie, won by his kind sympathy, soon overcame her fright.

Gradually, he drew the whole story from the penitent child, and also the history of Mummie, Auntie Mollie, and the "weeny baby idols !"

Suddenly Birdie looked up at him with a new hope—her eyes still bright with tears.

"If—if Birdie asks Zentle Zepherd to fordiv her an' make her a dood dirl, she won't be wicked zen, will s'e ? "

Before her new companion could solve the problem of "Zentle Zepherd," Birdie was kneeling up, her head buried on his shoulder and her soft curls brushing his cheek, as she murmured her nightly verse.

"Amen !" responded the man, in a voice rendered unsteady by emotion; then as she slipped from his arms, comforted, he said kindly: "And now we must go and find Auntie Mollie."

Guided by Birdie's somewhat incoherent directions, the man soon made his way to the room where Mollie, her work completed, had just made the alarming discovery of Birdie's absence.

As the truant entered, confidingly clasping the stranger's hand, the man raised his hat and smiled at Mollie's look of bewilderment.

"I found your little niece in one of the other rooms, and—helped her to find her way back to you," he explained.

"Thank you. It was very kind of you," exclaimed Mollie, gratefully. "I had become so engrossed in my work that I had only just missed her."

Then, in sudden recognition, she smiled. "I seem fated to receive kindness from you," she said shyly. "You—you are the gentleman who so kindly advised me about the disposal of my little Indian figures, last night. I intend going to see Mr. Smithson this afternoon."

The man looked at her hesitatingly for a moment.

"Ah ; so you recognise me again ? I suppose I had better confess," he went on slowly. "It was my own address I gave you. I—am interested in Indian lore. I knew a friend—once, who possessed a pair

of Indian idols exactly like those you had. Indeed, though I was unable to examine them closely, I felt almost certain they were the same."

"They belonged to my father—Ralph Chalmers," said Mollie, quietly.

"Then I was right ! I knew your father—years ago, Miss Chalmers."

Mollie turned to him now, all eagerness—the last remnant of restraint gone from her manner.

"You knew my father ? "

"Yes ; and—his brother, Jasper."

"I don't know him," she said shortly, "and—I have no wish to do so."

There was a painful silence for a moment; then Mollie went on slowly: "A man who could refuse to answer a message sent to him from his dying brother must be utterly heartless. It was not that we minded his having ignored the appeal for help for ourselves—my sister and I would have hated to receive anything from him; but he might at least have sent some message to a dying man."

"But surely, Miss Chalmers—there must be a mistake somewhere. I know for a fact that your uncle only learned of your father's death a few months ago—on his return from a long tour abroad. The letter must have missed him on his travels."

The girl looked at him doubtfully for a moment.

"Still, that does not excuse the long years of silence and estrangement—an estrangement my father never understood, and which was not of his seeking," she persisted.

"Perhaps not," he admitted. "Miss Chalmers, may I come and see you and—your sister this evening ? I—I would like to meet Ralph Chalmers's daughters. I used to be deeply attached to him—years ago. Perhaps, too, I could look at your Indian figures ? It would save you a journey."

"We shall be very pleased to see any friend of my father," said Mollie, cordially. "You perhaps know that my sister Doris, who lives with me, lost her husband shortly after her marriage ? Birdie, their little child, you have already met—and made friends with," glancing at the little hand still clasped in the stranger's.

"Yes ; Birdie and I are quite good friends," he said, with a smile. Then

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more gravely, "I had only just learned of your sister's loss." He glanced pityingly into the sweet young face, clouded with past sorrows, and added gently, "You are young to have known sorrow, and to have found life hard."

"It is for my sister I trouble most," she said quickly. "She is so delicate—not strong enough to battle with the world. But," she finished bravely, "we manage very nicely between us, and have many joys."

And giving him the address of their small flat, she left him, with the assurance of a welcome when he called.

III

MOLLIE and her sister sat waiting the coming of their father's friend. On the table lay the case of idols—for now Mollie could no longer keep the transaction a secret from her sister.

Doris protested strongly, for she knew how much Mollie prized the grotesque little images, which had stood upon their father's desk for so many years, and which he had given to Mollie in recognition of her indefatigable help in his antiquarian researches.

"Why need you do it?" she asked, persistently.

Mollie smiled inscrutably.

"That's my secret, sister mine. It just happens that I need money more than—idols, at present."

Before Doris could protest further, a low knock announced the arrival of their visitor—greatly to Mollie's relief.

"It is nice to meet a friend of my father," said Doris, when they were seated. "Is it long since you met him?"

"Yes—a good many years now, Mrs. Wentworth. But I knew him as a boy. We—we lived near each other then."

He hesitated a moment and glanced at Mollie; then said diffidently: "Did you know your Uncle Jasper had bought the old Grange where he and your father were born?"

Instantly the girl's face hardened.

"No," she said coldly—so coldly as to impress him with the sense of her utter indifference respecting the doings of that relative.

Her sister smiled, and, with the tolerance

of one older in years and suffering, said apologetically:

"You see, Mr. Smithson, Uncle Jasper is quite a stranger to us."

"Yes—to his own loss," he responded quickly. "Jasper Chalmers is a lonely man to-day."

Again Mollie made an impatient little gesture, as he went on hurriedly:

"Of course, I know he has only himself to blame. He realises that now."

"Really, Mr. Smithson, I shall begin to think soon you hold a brief for Uncle Jasper," said Mollie, with a little laugh.

"Perhaps I do," he returned quietly. "Though possibly you may think that a man who allows an early disappointment and sorrow to embitter his whole life is not worth a defence, Miss Chalmers?"

"I was not aware that he had had any," said Mollie quickly. "I always thought Uncle Jasper had been a particularly successful man all his life."

"Successful—yes, if money means success," he said, in a slightly bitter tone. "It seems he kept his secret even better than he thought."

The girls looked at their visitor with a dawning curiosity, as he turned from them, and sat gazing abstractedly into the fire—like one whose mind has wandered back into the past.

At last, he looked up and said with an effort:

"I—would like to tell you your Uncle Jasper's story. It is not altogether unusual, I suppose, for two brothers to fall in love with the same girl?"

"Do you mean—" began Mollie impetuously.

"I mean that your Uncle Jasper loved your mother before your father ever saw her. He—had only been waiting to attain a certain position before telling her of his love. The day he got his appointment he hurried home, on fire to tell his good news, and—the tale of his love; but his success was turned to gall by the disappointment awaiting him there. He had been forestalled that very day by his own brother!"

Mollie's brown eyes grew wonderfully soft as she listened to the old tragedy, so simply, yet so impressively, told by her father's friend.

"Your uncle went away," he continued, after a slight pause. "He kept his secret,

AUNTIES' IDOLS

but—he could not bear to return and look on their happiness. Though neither of them was to blame, yet his disappointment turned to anger, and a great bitterness took possession of his heart, at the thought of the brother who had so unconsciously robbed him. Even the prosperity which came to him almost unsought, certainly uncared for, only seemed to increase that bitterness; for now that he could not share his riches with the woman he loved, they seemed but an empty mockery. He became morose and morbid, shunning his fellows and being, in turn, shunned by them. And now, after a long tour abroad, he has returned, and was seeking a quiet spot in which to retire for the rest of his life, when he saw the old Grange advertised for sale, and, acting on a sudden impulse, he purchased it. But he speedily regretted his action, for there everything reminded him of the past. This week he fled to London—unable to endure the thought of a Christmas spent alone in the old home."

He stopped abruptly, and turning to the table, raised the small case in his hand, and said unsteadily:

"I believe it was the sight of 'Auntie's idols' that roused the first real touch of kindly sympathy his hard old heart had felt for years!"

With a little cry Mollie sprang to her feet, her sweet eyes misty with tears.

"You—you are Uncle Jasper!"

He took the girl's outstretched hands and pressed them warmly.

"Yes. I gave you a false name; I am heartless Uncle Jasper!" he confessed humbly. "But if unselfish little Mollie, who would have sacrificed her

idols for another's sake, will only bestow a little pity on her erring uncle, perhaps—even yet—"

"Please don't!" broke in Mollie, penitently. "I judged you too hardly. I—I did not understand."

He turned to Doris.

"And you?" he asked pleadingly.

"I too failed to understand before," she said softly. Then, with a gentle smile, "This is the season of peace and goodwill. We will forget the past and—begin anew."

"Thank you, my dears," said Uncle Jasper, tremulously. "And—you will not let your old uncle spend another lonely



At last, with an effort, she gathered up her courage, and darting suddenly down the room, dropped, like a small round ball, before the large image"—p. 112.

THE QUIVER

Christmastide? You will come back with him to the Grange—to the home of your father?" he asked eagerly.

Before Mollie could reply, the door was flung impetuously open, and Birdie stood on the threshold, with her favourite doll clutched, head downwards, in her chubby arms.

"Mummie—" she began eagerly, then stopped as she caught sight of the visitor.

Suddenly her little face lit up with a smile of recognition.

"Nice G'andad!" she exclaimed, delightedly, precipitating her small self into the old man's arms, with a little gurgle of pleased satisfaction. And "Grandad" Uncle Jasper remained to Birdie through all the years that followed.

"You see Birdie has adopted me," he said, with a happy smile. "You will come and spend Christmas with Grandad, little one?" he asked smilingly.

"An' Mummie, an' Auntie Mollie, too?" asked Birdie quickly.

"Yes, dear; we are all going to have a happy Christmas together," said Mollie, with a joyous little laugh.

Birdie—like her feathered namesakes without—was the first to awake in the old Grange on the peaceful Christmas morning; and after excitedly examining the contents of a bulgy-looking stocking, she soon proceeded to inspect the neighbouring bed, which, to her great disappointment, did

not contain any similar surprise for her Mummie's awaking.

But when she saw the mysterious-looking parcels awaiting both Mummie and Auntie Mollie in the breakfast room her unselfish little heart was satisfied.

Uncle Jasper stood on the hearth, and watched the scene with eyes full of quiet happiness, as the girls breathlessly opened their gifts.

The climax of their excitement was reached when two soft "nesty" fur coats were revealed. But to Birdie the discovery brought with it a strange confusion in her sense of the rightness or wrongness of idolatry; and when, a moment later, she caught sight of a tiny Christmas tree, all gorgeous and sparkling with toys, she openly expressed her gratitude to the big, old idol for his kindness.

But Mummie, with all the tenderness of love, explained to the excited child the mystery of Auntie Mollie's seeming worship of the little gods, and that these good gifts had all been sent by the kind "Gentle Shepherd," Who had forgiven her innocent disloyalty, and Whose birthday they were celebrating with such joy that very day.

Auntie Mollie has not parted with her idols, after all. The grotesque little figures now adorn her own small writing-table—not as objects of worship, but as constant reminders at once of an earthly father's love and a Heavenly Father's care.



A CHRISTMAS LEGEND

IN winter time, long years ago,
No flow'rs were ever seen;
Only in summer would they grow,
Amid their shelt'ring green :

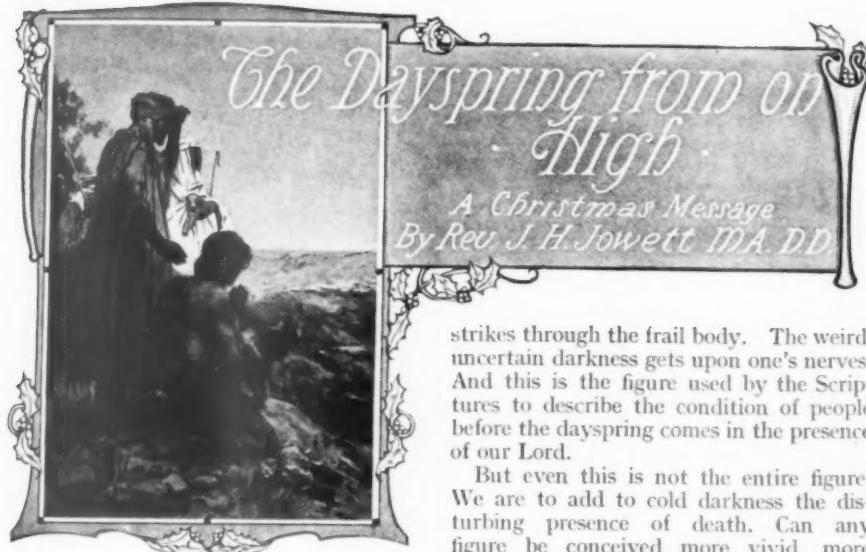
And winter lay upon a land,
With cruel severity,
Where grief and sin on ev'ry hand
Strove for the mastery.

At home—in lands beyond the sea,
It blossoms still and grows,
That flow'r we cherish thankfully
And call the "Christmas Rose."

Till on the hard, unkindly ground
A blossom, white and fair,
Of wondrous purity, was found,
Which grew and flourished there.

'Twas on the first glad Christmas morn,
And, from that very hour,
Fresh hope and strength and joy was born,
New faithfulness and power.

LESLIE MARY OYLER.



THERE is a very exquisite phrase in the Gospel by Luke, in which the coming of our Saviour is spoken of as a visitation of "the dayspring from on high." It is a very winsome figure of speech. The coming of our Lord was like the dayspring, the spring of the day, the day at the spring, the dawn. The words of the holy song in which this phrase is to be found proceed to describe the desolation which preceded the dawn, and that condition is put before us as "darkness and the shadow of death." Every word is cold and harsh as black ice. Let us try to realise the figure. It is, first of all, the figure of the darkness. Night is closing in. There is something restful about the gathering twilight, if there be a glowing fire upon the hearth. It is pleasant and almost luxurious to sit round the fire in the fading light of day. But the twilight becomes oppressive if it be long continued. Even though we have a cheery fire in the grate we say one to another, "Let us have a little light," and in the inspiration of its brightness the burden of the night is destroyed. But let the darkness deepen. Let the fire die out. Let the night wind moan down the street. And then sit in the house with no light, and no fire! The cold

strikes through the frail body. The weird, uncertain darkness gets upon one's nerves. And this is the figure used by the Scriptures to describe the condition of people before the dayspring comes in the presence of our Lord.

But even this is not the entire figure. We are to add to cold darkness the disturbing presence of death. Can any figure be conceived more vivid, more awful, more significant: a room, no fire, no light, gross darkness, and in the darkness the presence of death? And to have to sit there through the night! Such is the figure of speech. "Them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death." Such was the condition of the souls of men as contrasted with the condition created by the coming of our Lord and His "sweet reign of light and love."

The Coming of the Morn

In contrast with this awful symbol of the cold and death-filled night we have the sweet and gentle figure of the dawn. "The dayspring from on high!" The cold and chilly night gives place to a sunny and beautiful morning. The fears and spectres of the night, the haunting shapes that move in the gloom, the disquietude and the forebodings, are all dispersed by the clear, warm, lucid light of a wonderful dawn. Let my readers recall the most beautiful dawn they have ever seen, and let them use the recollection to interpret this wealthy scriptural figure of the birth and coming of our Lord. My own most memorable experience was when I watched the sunrise on the Rigi. It was a most marvellous break of day. For some time we waited, cold and expectant. Then the distant mountains

THE QUIVER

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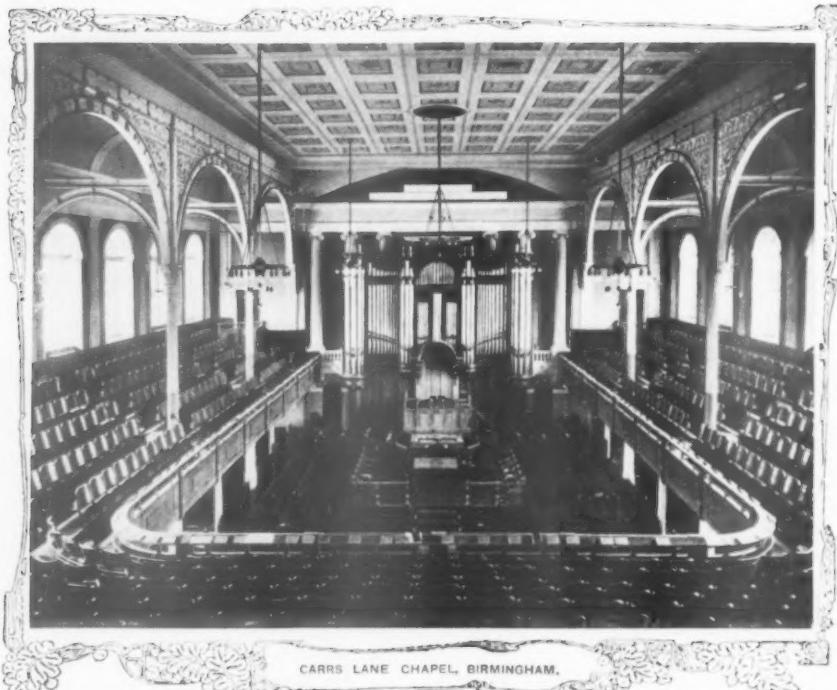
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CARRS LANE CHAPEL, BIRMINGHAM.

(The interior of Dr. Jowett's Church—specially photographed by the Pictorial Agency.)

of mightiest stature became flushed with rosy light. Then the nearer and less exalted peaks were clothed in morning hues. Then the lengthening rays began to steal down the slopes. The spire of a little church glowed like burnished gold. Then chalet after chalet caught the mystic beam, and homestead after homestead became radiant. Then at length the busy roads which circled the lake received the transfiguring rays, and sunrise bathed the highways of trade. All things were steeped in the morning glory. All things were unveiled and beautified in the all-encompassing splendour of the new day. Such was the sunrise on the Rigi, and I now recall that rare experience that I might find in it a symbol of the bright and transfiguring coming of our Lord. He too came upon the world as I saw the sun from the Rigi. The Sun of righteousness arises. The beams of divine glory quietly steal through the vales of time. Mysteries are irradiated. Dark places are made luminous. Common-

places are transfigured. Ordinary rooms are filled with extraordinary radiance. Hope and cheer spring into being, and so do patience and courage; and everywhere the earthly is made beautiful by its fellowship with Heaven. Such was the spring morning that dawned upon the world when Christ was born in Bethlehem. Yes, and that new day came among men in the gentle presence of a little babe. There was nothing sensational, nothing catastrophic, nothing of startling pageant: just the coming of a little child. "Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Could there have been a dawning more gracious, more gentle, more serene?

The Meaning of the Dawning

And what was the dawning to mean to the children of men? What did the day-spring bring to us? First of all, it brought us light. And what did the light illumine? It lit up God. We have only to compare what we know about God with the revela-

THE DAYSPRING FROM ON HIGH

tion made in Amos or Hosea to find what the dayspring has unveiled to us. In the Book of Amos the light is only dim, and it is very cold and hard. In Hosea the light is most graciously softened, but there is much uncertainty and gloom. There are glints in many of the Psalms which prelude the coming of the beautiful day. Such phrases as these give us hints of the coming One : " Like as a father pitith his children, so the Lord pitith them that fear Him." But at the best it is only starlight or perhaps moonlight ; it is not sunlight, with its cheery, rousing radiance. In Isaiah there are peaks from which we can begin to see the first grey lines of breaking day ; but a cold wind is blowing, and as yet there is no healing in the beam. And then Jesus came, " the dayspring from on high." And he came so softly, so gently, the Friend of little children, not breaking bruised reeds, not quenching smoking flax. He moved about among the broken men and women of the world, touching their wounds with

healing balm, and removing their infirmities by words of grace and light. And then He said to us, " He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." In the Lord Jesus God is illumined, and we behold His glory, " full of grace and truth."

The Stature of Man

What else did the morn illumine ? It lit up man. We never knew the greatness of man until our Lord appeared. He threw light upon our stature, and while we discover our depravity we also discover our worth. He told us that it was worth while for the Saviour to come and save us. That in itself is a revelation that fills the heart with infinite hope and cheer. And he threw light upon our condition. He told us how needy were our souls, He told us that we were broken-hearted, prison-bound, having lost our songs, held captive by our sins, and beaten and bruised on every side. He told us that He had come to redeem us from our servitude. He had brought for the



REV. J. H. JOWETT, M.A., D.D.

(The latest photograph, specially taken by the Pictorial Agency.)

THE QUIVER

prodigal the best robe, the ring of restored communion, and the assurance of reconciled and glorified sonship. We should never have known it if Christ had never been born, but "the dayspring from on high hath visited us," and by His radiance He has illumined man and God.

And what else was the dawn to mean to the children of men? He not only brought light, He was also the fountain of life. There is something so emancipating in the warm rays of the morning. The flowers awake to the kiss of the light of life. The birds are sensitive to the vital call of the dawn. There is life in the sunlight, and all things respond to its wooing. And our Lord brought not only light but life, not only revelation, but vitality. Our imprisonment might have been all the more oppressive if we had only known a revealer who himself was not a saviour. But He came, not merely as an ideal, but as a dynamic, not only as an illuminating ray, but as the power of recreation.

He came as a minister of liberty. He came to free us from death, and from all that is deadly. There are faculties in our life which have become enslaved by sin. They are like some ship held in the grip of arctic ice; pick and axe are impotent; nothing but a new climate can effect their emancipation. It is only when the warmer days return, when the sun climbs to his ascendancy, that the tyrannous ice will loose its grip, and the imprisoned boat will find its freedom. And so it was and is in human life. The tenderest things in our life have been nipped by the frost. The worthiest powers in our life are frozen in sinful captivity. Remedial expediences accomplish little or nothing. What we want is a new climate, a new moral temperature; and this is found in the coming of the dayspring, the vitalising beams of the light of life. "If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

And because He came to liberate the soul, He also came to rejuvenate it. He came to recreate the worn-out tissue, and to make it young again. He can take a worn-out affection and restore it until it is like the sweet spontaneous love of a little child. He can take a worn-out conscience and He can make it speak

with the truth and the authority of one of the angel spirits of the blest. And He can take a worn-out will, and so fill it with the energies of grace as to render it invincible. And all this vitality is found in the light, in the dayspring which converts decrepit age into sensitive, exuberant youth.

To Cheer the Hearts of Men

And thirdly, this glorious sunny dawning came to exhilarate the souls of men. How cheering is the sunbeam! What spirit we gain from the brightness of its shining! And our Lord came to bring cheer and blitheness to the despondent hearts of men. He will come to us when we are unsuccessful. We have faced the work of the day, and we have failed; we anticipated a victory and we have encountered defeat; and the heart has lost its spring, and we faint at the end of the day. Just then will our Lord come, with Christmas light and glory. For it is one of the gracious ministries of His love that we can have sunrise at eventide and songs in the night.

And He will bring us cheer when we are face to face with temptation. Temptation often threatens us, and our hearts are low with fear and foreboding. The evil one plays upon us with alternate menace and smiles, and our hearts fail before him. Just then our Lord will come to us as the dayspring, and we shall experience the triumphant energies of His sunny light.

And the dayspring will visit us in all the common sorrows of life. He will bring His cheery beams to the bedside of the sick, and to the open grave. It is wonderful how the Christmas light can irradiate the tomb. If we look with the eyes of faith we always see the bright angel sitting there, telling us that the loved one is "not here, he is risen." And when we ourselves draw near to death, we shall discover that the night is really the dawning, and that the farewell of our friends is the "good morning" from the other side. And so we can have the dayspring all along the way, from the buoyancy of youth to the frailties of age.

The dayspring has visited us. The light is here. Open your shutters, draw up your blinds, and "let the blessed sunshine in."

The Old Cats' Christmas

By BEATRICE ROSENTHAL

(Illustrated by H. M. BROCK, R.I.)

I

"THEY ain't 'arf agoin' on at each other, them old cats up top!" shouted Tommy Stokes, descending the basement stairs. "Jes' you listen to 'em, mother."

In an exuberance of spirit, excited by the row between the upstairs lodgers and the commencement of the Christmas holidays, Tommy essayed a record jump which brought him into violent collision with the pail in front of the bottom step. Headlong over it he went, a stream of dirty water sousing his small person as well as the floor of the passage his mother had just finished scrubbing. A succession of howls, mingled with Mrs. Stokes' shrill scolding and the angry voices above, made the house re-echo with discordant din; and Tommy, very damp about the knicker-bockers, with bruised shins and a cuffed ear, found himself pushed roughly outside the area door with forcible maternal injunctions to go and mind the twins as he had been bidden, and not show his face inside again until dinner-time, or he'd find he'd get what for.

"Wot with one thing and the other, it's enough ter drive anybody out of their seven senses," Mrs. Stokes declared, beginning to mop up the mess. "And wot's up now with them two up there—blest if the place ain't a reg'lar pandemonier!—Talk abart Christmas!"

She wrung the ragged house-flannel into the pail and stood and listened, looking up the dark well of the staircase. Oleander Villa, like the rest of the

houses in Verulam Grove, N.E., was of the semi-genteel type, run up by the cheap builder of forty years ago. The small rooms were all of them about equally sunless and poky, but it was on the construction of the staircase that the architect had expended his ingenuity, the lower flight being of the nature of an oblique, while the upper had the pitch of a respectable precipice.

On the narrow landing at the head of this upper flight, Mrs. Kegg and Miss Jivers, tenants of the "top front" and "top back" respectively, were having words. Mrs. Kegg was an imposing figure as she stood in her doorway, a large white apron defining the ample circumference of her waist. Her lace cap with its black velvet rosette, and a large jet brooch, struck the ultimate note of respectability. In her arms she held an apoplectic-looking pug, wearing an expression of injured innocence on his fore-shortened face.

About a yard away, her back to the opposite door, which was shut, stood the other lodger, lean, shabby, ill-kempt, in every way a contrast to her neighbour. She was laden with a pile of what at first sight appeared to be washing—a number of little white muslin pinnafores in process of being made, attached to each other like a string of sausages. From beneath one arm stuck out the handle of a hearth-broom, which the pug eyed suspiciously.

"There is such a thing as the law," said Mrs. Kegg, making the announcement in a loud, impressive voice.

"There is," Miss Jivers replied in a tone of ominous assent, "and,



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wot's more, there's sech things as damages, too, for destruction of property. I dunno as they'll pass these at the shop," smoothing out a crumpled white streamer edged with a scrap of Swiss embroidery. "It's too bad you can't leave yer work a minnit without 'avin' it worried by the nasty curs as some people chooses to pamper."

"If you're alludin' to me and my dog, Toby," said Mrs. Kegg still more loudly, "let me tell you there's no occasion for insults. You should akept your door shet."

"My door was shet, same as it is now," retorted Miss Jivers. "'E got in when I opened it ter run downstairs to fetch my scissors from the grinder wot was waiting on the step outside. My word! If I ketch 'im at it again!" The unfinished threat, rendered the more suggestive by a jerk of the broom-handle, was intended not for the scissors-grinder, but the pug who made a snap at Miss Jivers, showing all his strong white teeth.

"It'll pay people to keep their 'ands orf," said Mrs. Kegg warningly, holding her pet in check by his collar.

"Wicious little brute—a good leatherin', that's wot 'e wants," remarked Miss Jivers, an angry light in her eye. "People as keeps dogs should train 'em propperly and 'ave 'em under control."

"I don't require to be told what I ought to do by no single woman," Mrs. Kegg answered, returning to the direct form of attack, but evading the chief issue. "I've allus understood as this is a free country, and if I choose to keep one dog or half a dozen it's nobody's business but my own, so long as I pay for their keep and their licence."

"Of course, we can't *all* be retired ladies,

livin' on independent fortunes and lookin' down on everybody else. We 'aves ter slave pretty 'ard, some of us, and live short—but we're only Christians, we ain't pet dogs," and with this somewhat involved sarcasm, spoken in the bitterest of tones, Miss Jivers retired from the fray, shutting herself into the "top back" with a slam of the door that made Mrs. Stokes, engaged on the cooking of twopennyworth of "Yarmouth reds" over her kitchen fire, jump clean out of her skin, as she said, and rush to the foot of the stairs, crying :

"Wotever is the matter! You'll 'ave the place down afore you've finished!"

"You'd better come and speak to your other lodger," called back Mrs. Kegg. "She'll give you a taste of 'er temper and language. I can't go on putting up with it much longer," she went on, intending her remarks for Miss Jivers in her room as well as the landlady down below; "I've friends of mine as would be in a rare way if they knew what I was exposed to—Oh!" letting Toby slip out of her arms as a powerful aroma greeted her nostrils. "You've

something caught on the stove, Mrs. Stokes—P-phew! I must go and open my winder. It's enough to knock you down!"

"This is the second haxident this morning through them old cats," said Mrs. Stokes, as she scraped the charred fragments in the frying-pan on to a cracked dish. "It's nothink but one continual upset. Blest if I won't give 'em both the key of the street as soon as the New Year's turned, and see if I can't get a couple more like them young Steiner chaps."

They were the pair of brothers who had quarters on the "first," or rather ground floor, young German-Swiss waiters in a City

"There is such a thing as law," said M^r Kegg



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restaurant; ideal lodgers from a landlady's point of view, as they wanted no "doing for," and were out from the first thing in the morning until the last thing at night.

Mrs. Kegg, having opened her window an inch or two at the top, and fastened her door, proceeded to look to her dinner, a juicy bit of steak stewing with vegetables over a glowing fire. She spread a white cloth on the table and a sheet of newspaper on the floor, on which she presently set a plateful for Toby.

He fared better than Christmas Eve than the Stokes family in the basement, and very much better than the occupant of the "top back," whose mouthfuls of bread, eaten at her sewing-machine, lacked even the accompanying relish of frizzled herring.

Mrs. Kegg concluded her repast with a mince-pie; a day too soon she reminded herself, but there were a dozen and a half in the hamper sent her from the country, and when you live alone eighteen mince-pies take some getting through. It did not occur to her to give any to Tommy and his little twin sisters, who had all taken a wistfully keen interest in the arrival of the said hamper. Mrs. Kegg was not partial to those small folks. She was accustomed, she said, to a different class of children.

She had been in "good service" for the greater part of her life, beginning as under-nurse, and ending as confidential maid in the same family, and a legacy from her old mistress, coupled with her savings, kept her in comfort. Persons of leisure and means were somewhat rare in that part of the world, and Mrs. Kegg was fully aware of her social importance. Toby, too, whose forbears had enjoyed a long connection with "landed gentry," demeaned himself with dignity among the local mongrels.

He lay curled up in front of the fire,

"This is the second
accident this morning,
through them old cats."



his siesta undisturbed by the whirr of the sewing-machine that sounded through the thin partition, as loudly as though it were in the room. Mrs. Kegg was well used to it, but for some reason it specially annoyed her that afternoon.

"I don't know why I should stop on here," she mused; "there's them nice little flats they're building out Wetherwood Park way—two sizable rooms and scullery, water laid on, shelves and cupboards. If poor Lucy's girls wasn't married I could have had one of 'em to live with me. It's dull alone in a flat, but there'd be a better class of neighbours, and why shouldn't I be comfortable?" Whereupon Mrs. Kegg closed her eyes to calculate the

probable cost of linoleum for the two sizable rooms and scullery. When she opened them again it was tea-time. The whirr of the sewing-machine was still going on.

It was eight o'clock that evening when the last of the pinny's lay pressed and folded on Miss Jivers' bed. A small lamp on the table gave a dim light to the bare, comfortless room, littered all over with shreds of muslin and embroidery. Miss Jivers threw a cloth over the machine, collected the scraps from the floor, rolled them up, and put them with the pinny's, which she tied into a canvas wrapper. This done, she filled up a cup from the tea-pot, the contents of which had been stewing all day long on top of the miserable little oil-stove that "came cheaper" than a fire. Having drunk the brew, she put on a bonnet and cloak, extinguished lamp and stove, and taking the bundle under her arm, locked her door on the outside, and went forth into the raw, foggy night.

The streets were brightly lighted and thronged with cheerful bustling folk doing their Christmas marketing. It was the

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busiest time of the day for the shops in that neighbourhood. Butchers and poulterers invited custom with cries of "Buy! Buy! Buy!" The great mounds of currants and raisins in the grocers' windows looked as though nobody had yet made Christmas puddings. Hissing naphtha lights flared above the kerb-stalls, decked with holly and mistletoe. But the little shabby figure with the canvas bundle hurried along, seemingly indifferent to the scene around her. Once only did she slacken her steps a moment, in front of a window filled with cheap imitation jewellery. In one corner was a case of rolled-gold wedding-rings "warranted lasting wear."

Miss Jivers stood gazing at these, and her lips moved as though making a mental reckoning. "I'll see if I can't manage it to-night," she muttered to herself, and hurried on again.

She was fairly out of breath by the time she reached her destination, a wholesale children's outfitters, at the bottom of the long thoroughfare. The front of the shop was shuttered, but a side entrance was open. Two girls were standing in the doorway, talking with loud, angry voices. Miss Jivers pushed by them and went in. The place was stacked with cardboard boxes; behind a counter sat a young man of a foreign cast of countenance, his hat on one side, reading the racing news in a half-penny evening paper which he threw aside as Miss Jivers put her bundle down on the counter.

He tossed the packet of scraps on to a heap of similar ones in a corner, checked the work rapidly, made an entry in a ledger beside him, and handed some money to Miss Jivers.

"But this ain't right!" she exclaimed, looking at the coins. "It's three gross I've brought back."

"It's all the boss is paying for this lot," he answered shortly.

"A right-down wicked shyme, that's wot it is!" burst forth one of the girls; they had followed Miss Jivers into the shop. "Cuttin' dahm the prices arter the work's done, Christmas an' all. Cheatin' lot o' sweaters, that's wot you are!"

"None o' that now," said the young man roughly. "Take yer work and clear out," pointing to a parcel on the counter. They burst into shrill, coarse laughter.

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He shrugged his shoulders and turned to Miss Jivers. "Take extry gross?" he asked laconically.

"Yes," she answered. It was not the first time that the firm had played the mean trick of lowering the stipulated payment after the work had been brought back finished. But Miss Jivers was no young girl for whom life still held possibilities. An elderly woman, worn by a long course of overwork and semi-starvation, she had not enough bodily vigour to claim her just due. Besides, it would mean the loss of employment; and for such as she, even the most sweated work was getting harder and harder to come by. The shadow of want ever lurked in the background.

"By midday next Tuesday sharp, mind," he said, putting the extra pile with some lengths of embroidery into Miss Jivers' wrapper. "Now," to the two standing with linked arms in the doorway, "if you want

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the boss, you can wait outside till the end of the week. I'm goin' to lock up."

Miss Jivers hitched the bulging canvas under her arm and started her walk homewards. The frosty air bit through her ill-nourished frame ; there was a numb ache in her half-frozen feet. She paused again at the jeweller's window, and glanced wistfully at the case of rings. "Shan't be able to do it this Christmas," she said to herself and with a weary sigh passed on.

II

"I'M leavin' a nice bit of fire in the kitchen, Miss Jivers," Mrs. Stokes called up the stairs early in the afternoon of Christmas Day. But it was Mrs. Kegg who appeared looking over the banisters.

"We're jest orf, me and the children," explained Mrs. Stokes, standing in the front hall. "We shall be back some time to-night. The Steiners is away over Boxing Day ; so there's jest you and Miss Jivers at 'ome. There's a nice bit of fire downstairs—so cold for 'er sittin' this weather with only that oil-stove of 'ers. She's in, ain't she ? "

"As fur as I'm aware," replied Mrs. Kegg tartly. "Anyway, she ain't deaf and dumb. Don't hold me responsible if the place ketches alight, that's all," and she went back into her own quarters.

"They're one as bad as the other, old cats," said Mrs. Stokes, after shouting in vain to Miss Jivers that it was beautiful and warm in the kitchen with the kettle on the side of the hob ; and she joined Tommy and the twins waiting outside, impatient to start off to their Christmas dinner at Pentonville, where a well-to-do uncle in the tripe and saveley business had invited them all to his hospitable board.

The short foggy afternoon was rapidly closing in when Miss Jivers' door opened softly. It was Mrs. Kegg's voice that had kept her from answering the landlady's kindly message. But now that the coast was clear, the thought of a fire to her stiff, cramped body was too tempting to be resisted any longer, so armed with tea-pot, cup, and tin of condensed milk, she was preparing to creep down and enjoy a bit of borrowed warmth.

Her foot was on the stair, when the door of the "top front" opened suddenly.

Miss Jivers started guiltily, and turned to go back, endeavouring to hide the things she carried under her apron. But Mrs. Kegg seemed not to notice. She stood listening. "Did you 'ear that ? " she asked in a nervous whisper.

"Wot ? " said Miss Jivers.

"As if somebody was moving about in the basement," said Mrs. Kegg still more nervously. "I wonder if Mrs. Stokes looked to the doors and winders. There's a lot of desperate characters gets about Christmas time. There—" Mrs. Kegg held up her hand. "Didn't that sound like footsteps ? "

They peered silently down into the yellowish gloom with ears strained to catch the faintest of those creaks and echoes that punctuate the silence of an empty or sleeping house. It was a holiday revel of rats or mice behind the woodwork doubtless, that suggested burglars to Mrs. Kegg's imagination.

"You do 'ear of sech things," she shuddered. "There was an old lady stunned and left for dead in a house in the Junction Road last Boxing Day. And jest us two unprotected women alone in the place," with another fearful glance



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below ; "they'd murder us and ransack the house without anybody being the wiser."

"Well, nobody'll murder me for what I've got worth stealing," answered Miss Jivers with a short laugh. She was not a fanciful person and did not share her neighbour's fears. "Besides," she added, "you've got the dog."

"To be sure!" cried Mrs. Kegg. "Toby!"

He was enjoying a doze after an extra good dinner, and was not at all inclined to stir. After calling him three or four times Mrs. Kegg went in and brought him out in her arms.

"Go for 'em, Toby—good dog," she said, putting him down at the head of the stairs. "A policeman outside may 'ear 'im bark and know there's something wrong," to Miss Jivers. "Go for 'em, Toby—go for 'em!"

But Toby the sleek and replete would not be coaxed to act on the defensive. He blinked indolently up into his mistress's face, yawned and stretched himself; after which exhibition of mettle he turned tail and went back to his favourite spot on the hearthrug.

"He's not one of the fighting species of animal, though a thoroughbred one of his kind," said Mrs. Kegg by way of excuse for her pet's behaviour. "Besides, what could he do, poor little feller, if the place is being broke in? I wouldn't have him injured for the world."

"Well, one of us 'ad better go down, I s'pose," said Miss Jivers, and she opened her door to deposit her tea-things.

"I'd offer to do it," said Mrs. Kegg, holding her hand to her side, "but the truth is my 'eart's weak, and the doctor's warned me against anything in the nature of a shock. You'll carry something with you for protection," as her fellow-lodger prepared to descend. "I should take the poker and tongs."

The "top back" possessed no fire-irons, so Mrs. Kegg produced a pair of solid steel implements, her private property.

"I'll keep on the look-out and be ready to scream through the winder if you should call out 'Help!'" she valiantly promised, watching Miss Jivers go down armed like Tweedledum and Tweedledee for their classic encounter.

No shriek for succour rose, however.

nothing but the sound of Miss Jivers' own movements in the basement, and Mrs. Kegg's terrors began to subside. The door of the "top back" was ajar, a sudden curiosity impelled her to look inside. She had never seen the room, though they had been living for weeks with only the wall between them.

In her comfortable warm gown Mrs. Kegg shivered as she looked at the grim evidences of poverty and toil—the black unlighted stove, the brown paper stuck over a cracked pane of the curtainless window, the white pinapores scattered over bed and table.

"She was going down to the fire," she said to herself, catching sight of tea-pot, cup, and milk-tin tumbled together on a chair. "What a Christmas! Oh! Poor soul! Poor soul!" A thrill of pure human compassion, such as in all her life she had never felt before, stirred in Mrs. Kegg's bosom and brought a mist before her eyes.

She slipped out of the room quickly, hearing Miss Jivers in the hall below.

"It's all right, I've 'ad a good look round, everywhere's locked up safe, not a sign of a soul," she called up to her neighbour. She tried the front door, and bending down, shot-to the rusty bottom bolt.

"You'll feel safer now," she said.

"Yes," answered Mrs. Kegg in a tone of relief. "Alone in the house like this we can't be too particler. And the kitchen fire?" she asked, by way of an afterthought.

"Out," said Miss Jivers, mounting the stairs.

Mrs. Kegg thought of the tea-things on the chair, the unlighted stove, and the thrill of pity stirred her heart again.

"I'm greatly obliged to you for going down," she began, with the shamefaced feeling that she had never before been "neighbourly" with Miss Jivers. "I don't mind saying as I'm given to be a bit nervous, and a time when everybody is away enjoying theirselves makes you feel extra lonely. I've been expecting a friend over, an old lady from Islington, but she'll never come out in this fog. Will you come in and take tea with me, Miss Jivers? It 'ud be a bit more cheerful for us both than being by ourselves Christmas Day and all."

"Thank you," said Miss Jivers stiffly. "I can't be leaving my work."



"The spirit of peace and goodwill had come to preside."

"Bring it along with you—I've a nice firm table for the machine to stand on," replied Mrs. Kegg, really pining for company. "You can do it jest as well in my place as your own as fur as that goes."

At the real heartiness of the invitation Miss Jivers gave way.

"It don't matter about the machine," she admitted. "I've some fixing I can get on with—if you don't mind me bringing it, I shall be pleased to come," and handing back the poker and tongs, Miss Jivers went into her room. Mrs. Kegg also retired, leaving her door hospitably open.

A low knock heralded the entry of Miss Jivers. She had smoothed her greyish hair, given herself a brush down, and pinned a strip of the muslin waste round her neck by way of a collar. In spite of her pallor and thinness, and the harsh lines graved by want and misfortune on her face, traces of good looks were still to be seen there.

"Dressed decent, she'd make quite a good appearance," thought Mrs. Kegg, as

she put her guest into a cosy cretonne-covered armchair by the fire. Toby looked up in astonishment; but realising that the wielder of the broom-handle was there in friendly guise, settled himself again complacently.

While her hostess made tea, Miss Jivers, a string of pinnyfolds in her lap, sat silent looking at the bright fire, the array of Christmas cards and photos on the mantelshelf, the tidy furniture, the bed in the corner with its bright brass knobs and frilled coverlet. The scarlet border and white fringe of the table-cloth, the pretty paper lampshade, the vases of holly and chrysanthemums seemed to her astonishingly luxurious; her fingers tacked pleats mechanically as she eyed the festive cheer, the three-cornered cushion of ham, crusty currant loaf and dish of mince-pies; the deep golden pat of butter in a nest of celery sticks, and the couple of pink-brown eggs which Mrs. Kegg was just removing from a tiny enamelled saucepan.

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"They come from the Home Farm at Stipplewick Hall, where I lived upwards of thirty year," remarked that good lady, "and I can vouch for 'em being fresh, which can't be depended on with shop ones whatever the price. Now, will you sit here, Miss Jivers?"

Miss Jivers took her seat at the table in silence. New-laid eggs, home-cured ham, and country butter were not articles of diet in which she was wont to indulge. But she appreciated them none the less, and an appetite sharpened by chronic hunger imparted a keener relish to the meal. After the third cup of tea her gruff shyness began to disappear, and Mrs. Kegg, acting the part of lady bountiful somewhat patronisingly at first, began to feel the heart-glow that comes of doing kindness, forgot to be grand, and talked in a natural friendly way. The spirit of peace and goodwill had come to preside over the little feast in the "top front" of Oleander Villa.

After tea they grew still more sociable, sitting close to the fire. Miss Jivers, in the armchair, stitched away, while Mrs. Kegg, delighting in a listener, nursed Toby and recounted parts of her personal history with that of the "family" she had lived with so long.

"They don't forget me," she proudly asserted. "Fruit, flowers, vegetables from the gardens all in season, and Christmas—well, you can see for yourself. But it's those I think the most of," pointing to the greetings on the mantelshelf. "That's Miss Doris that was—Honourable Mrs. St. Hubert, and her baby," taking down a framed platinotype. "Delicate little thing she used to be, we thought we'd never rear her, and now she's got this bonny boy of her own," she went on, with an old nurse's motherly pride. "I was thinking of her and the rest in Church this morning—the singing of the hymns seemed to bring the old days back so real. They used to be merry Christmases with all them little ones about." Her voice had grown soft with reminiscence.

"You're fond of children," observed Miss Jivers.

"I am of those I've had to do with—I brought up from the cradle, as you may say," Mrs. Kegg replied.

"Ever 'ad any of your own?"

"No, indeed!" The answer was so

sharp, that Miss Jivers, rather taken aback, expressed the hope that she had given no offence.

"Where nothing's intended, nothing's meant." Mrs. Kegg leaned forward to stir the fire while making this oracular observation.

Then she sat for a few minutes without speaking, stroking Toby's ears and looking at her visitor as though she were debating something inwardly.

"Miss Jivers—" she began, then stopped and cleared her throat before going on, "you'll let it go no further, but—the fact is—I'm one of them as thinks it should be the same over here as it is in foreign parts"—Mrs. Kegg did not particularise—"where the women is all called 'Mrs.' over forty, married or no. 'Miss' is all very well for chits of girls; it ain't respectable enough for persons getting into years like you and me. I was always Mrs. Kegg at the Hall, and I've got used to it, like. I think nothing of 'usbands as 'usbands"—Mrs. Kegg laid great stress on this point. "It's the standing I look at—not as I wish to deceive anybody, but if you're single one does get that put upon, as I dare say you've found out."

Miss Jivers gave a queer sort of grunt.

"P'raps so," she said shortly. She threaded her needle, took up her work again, then dropped it into her lap and looked as though she also were making up her mind whether to speak or not.

"I was in service, too," she said at length, in a quick, hard voice, as though ashamed of the impulse of confidence. "I left to get married. 'E lost 'is 'ealth—died arter a couple of year—leavin' me with one little 'un about as big as 'im there," pointing to the photograph. "I lost 'er when she was five—measles and whooping cough. I'd to part with my ring while she was ill," the voice shook and the speaker paused a minute. "I've never been able to redeem it or get another, work being so bad," she went on, "so I've gone by my single name. The little 'un dying, I'd no ties in the world—no one—." Her voice broke entirely, and she leaned forward, burying her face in her hands.

"Oh, my dear—my poor dear!" cried Mrs. Kegg. There were tears in her eyes, too, and a sudden new feeling of respect for her shabby fellow-lodger. Though she pro-

THE OLD CATS' CHRISTMAS

fessed to despise husbands, Mrs. Kegg, to continue giving her the compliment of her assumed title, had all the veneration of the elderly old-fashioned spinster for the married woman.

"Life's a strange thing," she sighed, dabbing her eyes. "Some on us sees a rare lot of sorrow afore we die. Still, there's the brighter side to look at," in a more cheerful key. "Now, since we've been sitting here, Miss Jivers," she continued, "I've been thinking how much pleasanter it is for two living together than one. I came to this part to be with a poor sister of mine, but now she's gone and her family all settled, I'm like yourself—no ties. What I should like is to find someone to join me in a nice little home. I'd undertake the furnishing. There's them new County Council flats out Wetherwood Park way—two sizable rooms and scullery, water laid on, shelves and cupboards, no objection to small dogs being kept by the tenants," softly patting Toby, "the very thing for two like us—what do you think, Miss Jivers?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," Miss Jivers said, setting tucks with tremulous fingers. "I've worked and struggled on for myself a good many years—I couldn't be beholden to nobody."

"Cert'ainly not," returned Mrs. Kegg,

briskly. "But there's a difference between working and slaving, my dear, if you'll permit me to say so. It's a mutual arrangement I'm proposing, and I don't see no reason why it shouldn't turn out well. I'm tired of being lonely, that's the truth, and if I'll suit you, I feel sure you'll suit me. We've begun the right way for making good friends, as they say, by plenty of falling out. Anyway, what about trying it for a bit—to see?"

Miss Jivers deliberated.

"Well, we might do that," she finally agreed.

"And it shan't be my fault if you repent of it," declared Mrs. Kegg emphatically. "Let's shake hands on it, shall we?"

They both stood up to do so with the sense of sealing a solemn compact. Then, looking at each other and hesitating a little, they came closer and embraced.

They drew apart again, wiping their eyes, and Mrs. Kegg put her handkerchief in her pocket and began fumbling with her left hand.

"No! Now you're not to say a word!" she exclaimed, clasping Miss Jivers' thin wrist, and thrusting a narrow gold band on the work-worn "wedding finger." "It's you that's got the proper right to it—you must wear it for the sake of them that's gone. Let it be my Christmas present."

They came closer and embraced.





CHRISTMAS AT COURT IN THE OLD TIME: THE EARL-MARSHAL RIDES ABOUT THE HALL
DURING DINNER TO KEEP ORDER.—See page 133.

[Drawn by Wal Paget.]



(Illustrated by WAL PAGET)

"England was merry England, when
Old Christmas brought his sport again.
'Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale,
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year."

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

BLITHE and gay is Christmas-time. It is a happy season for the young, and the old folks rejoice in the pleasures that memory brings, and take delight in seeing the glad faces and sparkling eyes of the youngsters who gather round the Christmas fire. Are we as merry as our forefathers were at this joyous feast? There are pessimists and kill-joys amongst us, who fain would persuade us that all our merriment is forced and unreal. There are spoilt and pampered children who assume the *blasé* airs of grown-up folk, are bored at a pantomime, and think it childish to appear amused. But these are monstrosities, freaks, absurdities. We like not sullen, dull and vacuous faces around our Christmas hearth. Perhaps you will deign to smile or even laugh when I tell you how our sires kept their Christmas feast in the days when England was Merrie.

But when were those days? When was England really Merrie? Shall we go back to the Saxon thane's hall and listen to the jests of the jocund guests, and the strains of the minstrels, gleemen, harpers; and see the tricks of the jugglers and the antics of buffoons and dancers or tumblers as they played around the huge log fire in the centre of the hall? Or shall we find those halcyon times in Edwardian days, or when Queen Bess reigned; or did Dutch William bring the merriment over the

seas with him from Holland? No one can tell us the exact date of what we are pleased to call Merrie England. In all ages there has been much to kill and destroy human happiness. Wars have raged again and again. Plagues have descended on towns and villages and carried away dear ones, and left sorrow in their train. Bad times, want, poverty, and even starvation have been occasionally dreaded visitors. But in spite of all, in whatever age, when the Christmas bells rang out their sweet message of the Birth of the Christ-King, "of peace and goodwill to men," young hearts would rejoice and make Christmas merry.

"It were unwisely done, should we refuse
To cheer our path, as feately as we may—
Our lonely path to cheer, as travellers use,
With merry song, quaint tale, or roundelay.
And we will sometimes talk past troubles o'er,
Of mercies shown, and all our sickness heal'd,
And in His judgments God remembering love;
And we will learn to praise God evermore,
For those "glad tidings of great joy" reveal'd
By that sooth messenger, sent from above."

So we will wander at will through the ages in quest of quaint Christmasing. We will look in at the King's palace and visit the farmer's kitchen. The hall of the manor-lord is always open to well-behaved strangers like ourselves, and we will watch the Yule log being brought in by the sturdy woodmen, listen to the Boar's Head carols, dance a merry country dance, and we will not be offended if the Lord of Misrule plays some sorry trick upon us and raises a hearty laugh at our expense.



"LIGHT WERE THE FEET OF THE GUESTS AS THEY DANCED THE OLD COUNTRY DANCES"—P. 136.

First we will go to the King's court. From Saxon times the royal palaces were gay and bright at Christmas, that, together with Easter and Whitsuntide, being observed as a joyful festival, when after the midnight Mass on Christmas Eve the King right royally entertained his nobles, prelates and great men with splendid and prodigious hospitality. Nor were the poor forgotten. Henry III. in the year 1248, when he was keeping his Christmas at Winchester, ordered his treasurer to fill Westminster Hall with poor people, and feast them for a whole week. At the royal table there was an extraordinary prodigality. John of Salisbury tells us of a Christmas feast that began at three o'clock in the afternoon and ended at midnight, and that not only the English land was ransacked to provide food, but that delicacies were brought from such remote places as Constantinople, Babylon, Alexandria, Palestine, Tripoli, Syria and Phoenicia. Some of the names of the dishes sound strange in our ears. We

should be very bold to eat them. Would you like to taste delligrout, maupigyrum, karumpie? Crane's flesh and peacocks sound a little more attractive, and these delicacies were washed down by draughts of pigment, morat, mead, garhiofilac, hypocras (wine mixed with honey), spiced claret, cider, perry and ale. The romance of "Richard Coeur de Lion" tells us that :

"Christmas is a time full honest;
King Richard is honoured with gret feste,
All his clerks and barouns
Were set in their pavlounys,
And served with grete plenté
Of mete and drink and each dainté."

King Richard II. was even more prodigal in his Christmas feastings. When Westminster Hall, where now our legislators sit, was enlarged and embellished, he had a most royal Christmas feast, providing twenty-eight oxen, three hundred sheep, and game and fowls without number, feeding ten thousand guests for many days. Perhaps you would have preferred to sit down at table in the same

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Hall with Henry V., the hero of Agincourt, and his bride Queen Katherine, and partaken of the following fare : Brawn and mustard, dedells in burneaux, frument with balien, pike in erbage (herbs), lamprey powdered, trout, colding, fried plaice with marling, crabs, leche lumbard flourished and tarts. That was only the first course ! There were two others to follow, besides certain dishes they called subtleties, such as a pelican sitting on her nest with her young, and an image of St. Katherine, in compliment to the Queen, bearing a book and disputing with the doctors, showing a reason or motto in her right hand with the inscription "Madame le Royne." You would have been surprised to see the Earl-Marshall riding on a charge about the Hall during dinner to keep order.

But enough of food and guzzling. How else did these royal banqueters amuse themselves ? Christmas was a great time for grand tournaments, when gallant

knights tilted with lance or fought with swords in the lists clad in armour surrounded by a bevy of beauty and fashion. Gorgeously decorated stands for the spectators, richly decked pavilions, magnificently attired heralds, prancing steeds and exhibitions of knightly prowess, made a grand spectacle which delighted our forefathers. Modern pageants help us to realise what these scenes of splendour must have been.

Lords and squires and knights in castle and manor house closely imitated the scenes of royal splendour and magnificence displayed at Christmas-time in the palaces of kings. In addition to the pleasures of bounteous feasting it was a great season for plays and interludes. Both in the King's court and in the baron's hall plays founded upon the Nativity of the Saviour were acted ; but these interludes were not confined to religious subjects, and mumming and masquerades, pageants and dis-



"THE LORD OF MISRULE WAS A VERY BUSY PERSON . . . CONDUCTING THE WOODMEN AS THEY BROUGHT A HUGE LOG INTO THE BARON'S HALL" — A. E. H.

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guisings were the usual accompaniments of the Christmas festival, which lasted twelve days. The Master of the Revels and the Lord of Misrule were important officials who devised the merry-makings and jests, and amazed the company with tricks and jests and practical jokes.

The Lord of Misrule was a very busy person, always fussing around; now conducting the woodmen as they brought a huge log into the baron's hall, wearing a very solemn air, and then capering about the hall, and anon cracking a joke with a guest, or ushering in with timely jest some curious "subtlety." He was well paid for his pains. Henry VIII. gave as much as £15 6s. 8d. to his Lord of Misrule, and when we estimate the value of money then as fifteen times what it is to-day, the amount received by this officer seems fairly liberal. And then there were the "disguisings," when merry maskers, disguised in silk attire and bearing staff torches, entered the hall and danced with the ladies. This was a new fashion introduced in the time of Bluff King Hal. But the play was the great attraction, and the Duke of Northumberland used to pay his chaplain, William Peres, 13s. 4d. for making an interlude for his Christmas feast. It was not unusual for country squires to keep open house for all comers during Christmas-time, when minstrels and dancers flocked to the hall and crowds enjoyed right good fare. Such a hospitable squire was John Carminow, in the county of Cornwall, who used to entertain all who cared to come during the twelve days of the feast, and provided for their feastings twelve fat bullocks, twenty Cornish bushels of wheat, thirty-six sheep, with hogs, lambs and fowls of all sorts.

There was a charming sense of equality in these old-time feasts. All distinctions of rank or fortune were laid aside. The poor shared equally with the rich guest the squire's bounty. Of the Penshurst feasts in the days of the Sidneys we read that the dishes did not grow coarser as they receded from the high table, and no huge salt-cellars divided the noble from the ignoble guests. The Christmas feast was a bond of union between all classes, and begat friendly relations between lords or squires and tenants or peasants which nought could disturb.

One important ceremony was the usual accompaniment of the feast and that was the bringing in of the boar's head. At Queen's College, Oxford, the old-fashioned custom is still preserved, a "right merrie joute of ye olden tyme." A large boar's head, weighing between sixty and seventy pounds, surmounted by a crown, wreathed with gilded sprays of laurel and bay, mistletoe and rosemary, with small banners surrounding, is brought into the hall by three bearers, whose entry is announced by trumpet. A procession of the provost and fellows precedes the entry of the boar's head. The bearers are accompanied by the precentor, who chants an old English carol, the Latin refrain being joined in by the company. The following are the words of this ancient ditty :

*Caput apri deferō
Reddens laudes Domino.*

The boar's head in hand bring I,
Bedecked with bays and rosemary ;
And I pray you, masters, be merry,
Qui estis in convivio.

The boar's head, I understand,
Is the bravest in all the land,
When thus bedecked with gay garland ;
Let us *servire cantico*.

Our steward hath provided this,
In honour of the King of Bliss,
Which on this day to be served is
In Reginensi atrio.

*Chorus : Caput apri deferō,
Reddens laudes Domino.*

Far better in country kitchen than in hall or palace do we find the true old English modes of keeping Christmas. It was a glorious time for the villagers. You could see the farmer's kitchen gaily decorated with holly and mistletoe, a huge fire burned on the hearth, and songs and laughter made the old beams echo. In the North of England every farmer gave two feasts, one called "the old folks' night," and the other "the young folks' night." The old farmer received his neighbours at daybreak, when the black-jacks were passed round, and woe betide the luckless cook who had overslept herself and had not boiled the haccin, or large sausage, ere the day dawned, for then she was seized by the arms and made to run round the courtyard until she was ashamed of her laziness. And as the day wore on there were com-



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"God rest ye, merry gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For remember Christ our Saviour
Was born on Christmas Day." —Page, 136.

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panies of mummers, who still come round at Christmas-time and act their mumming play, a strange relic of the old folk-drama. You can still see "King George," or "St. George," who fights and kills a "Turkish knight," who is raised to life again by the doctor, after swallowing a gigantic pill. Then there is "Molly," a stalwart man dressed in a woman's gown, shawl and bonnet, with a besom in his hand, who strives in his dialogue to imitate a woman's voice. "Molly" begins the play by flourishing her broom, and pretending to sweep with it, while she drawls out the words :

"A room, a room, I do presume,
For me and my brave men;
For we be come this Christmas-time
To make a little rhyme.
And here we come at Christmas-time,
Welcome, or welcome not,
Hoping old Father Christmas
Will never be forgot."

The characters look very odd in their strange garb. King George is dressed as a knight with helmet and clothes covered with strips of coloured paper, and he bears a wooden sword. The Turkish knight has a blackened face, and is sometimes converted into Beau Slasher, a French officer. Then there is Jack Vinny, a jester with a tall fool's cap; Happy Jack, who is a very miserable person, and old Beelzebub, with a long white beard, resembling Father Christmas. This is a quaint and curious survival of the old interludes that pleased our forefathers in days of yore.

The farmhouse kitchen is gay and bright. A huge kissing-bush hangs from a beam, and there are many youths who readily avail themselves of the privilege which its presence affords. There were plenty of games for the amusement of the company—blind-man's buff and hunt the slipper, and others of a similar character. Light were the feet of the guests as they danced the old country dances, and anon the carol-singers stood beneath the kissing-bush and chanted :

"God rest ye, merry gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For remember Christ our Saviour
Was born on Christmas Day";

and then sang "While shepherds watched
their flocks by night."

The company then began to feel hungry again, and many special dishes peculiar to particular districts have to be eaten, such as giblet pie in Cornwall. In that county they have squab pie, made of mutton and apples, onions and raisins; mackerel pie, maggoty pie, and so many others that it is said the devil is afraid to come into Cornwall for fear of being baked in a pie. Furmety, or wheat corn, boiled in milk with spices, is a famous Yorkshire Christmas dish, and egg-flip finds favour in Lancashire. The holiday extended over twelve days, and there was much to do within this space of time. The orchards had to be wassailed in order to bring good luck to the crops, and sometimes fired at with guns for a like purpose.

We have no space to describe the hoodening, the mumping, the sports on Plough Monday, and countless other customs which clustered round the Christmas feast. The poet Withers has caught something of the joy of the old-fashioned Christmas when he sang :

"Lo! now is come our joyfulst feast,
Let every man be jolly;
Each room with ivy leaves is drest
And every post with holly.

Now all our neighbours' chimneys smoke
And Christmas blocks are burning;
Their ovens they with baked meats choke,
And all their spits are turning.

Without the door let sorrow lie,
And if, for cold, it has to die,
We'll bury it in Christmas pie,
And evermore be merry."

Thus the happy night was spent ; and if, like grave elders, we look down upon these frolics of a younger age, and think ourselves so much wiser and better than our forefathers, we should not forget the benefits which come from open-handed hospitality, goodwill, and simple manners, nor regard with scornful contempt honest merriment and light-hearted gaiety. In spite of the croakers and the stern critics of to-day, in spite of the sad-visaged, spoilt children of the world, the Sadducees and mockers of old customs, we wish all our readers as Merry a Christmas as our ancestors enjoyed in the days when our country was called "Merrie England."

Our New Serial Story

Cynthia Charrington

By Mrs. GEORGE DE HORNE VAIZEY

(Illustrated by J. E. SUTCLIFFE)

SYNOPSIS OF FIRST INSTALMENT

CYNTHIA CHARRINGTON is a charming, beautiful and cultured girl, the daughter of wealthy and loving parents, who has never known want, trouble or anxiety; but who—perhaps for that very reason—admits to “a spasm of longing for something new—for a change, even if it were perhaps not quite so nice.” Her mother, who in her young days has known what it is to bathe with the world, confesses only to a feeling of infinite satisfaction and thankfulness for the comfort and affection which surround their little home, and would, if she could, save her daughter from those darker experiences of which she herself has only too painful a recollection.

The second chapter gives an account of a little party given by Mrs. Charrington in honour of her birthday. Among the guests are Professor Dauglish, a brilliant but unfashionable young University man, and Mr. Stamford Reid, who is a dealer in cotton, and for whom Cynthia possesses a secret liking. The party ends rather tragically, for on that day the father of Beth Elliot, Cynthia's greatest friend, becomes a failure and absconds. Mr. Reid blurts out the news in the hearing of Beth.

CHAPTER III

AFTER THE THUNDERBOLT

LOOKING back over the history of that tragic hour Cynthia confessed to herself that Professor Dauglish had been a tower of strength, and that without him she would have been hopelessly adrift. Poor Mr. Reid had seemed stupefied by the mischief wrought by his disclosure, and had shown neither initiative nor resource. Cynthia was honest with herself, however successfully she might disguise her feelings from others; she did not shut her eyes to the fact that her hero had contented himself with leaning against a wall, looking handsome in a despairing Byronic fashion. More extraordinary still she had not expected him to do more; it was to the professor she had turned for advice in that awful moment when Beth was lying back in a fainting condition on the lounge.

“What are we to do? She can't stay here. We shall have the crowd back at any minute. We must keep the secret for to-night.”

“Haven't you a back staircase? Where is it? I'll give her my arm, and help her along.”

Of course! Why had she not thought of that herself? Cynthia shot a grateful glance, helped to raise Beth from her chair, and while the professor took one arm, supported her on the other, and boldly crossed the hall towards the door leading to the servants' premises. People were passing to and fro on either side, people laughing and talking, too much engrossed in their own affairs to have much attention to spare.

No one cast so much as a glance after the young mistress of the house and her companions; no one felt a tinge of curiosity as they disappeared behind the service door. Cynthia lifted her skirts and led the way up the first flight of stairs into a small, comfortably furnished room, in the grate of which a cheerful fire was burning.

“Here, Beth, darling, we can be quiet here. Nannie is downstairs helping the maids. Sit down by the fire, darling, no one will come.”

But Beth refused to sit down. The enforced action had dispelled the creeping faintness, and she put aside her friend's arm with a determined action.

“No! I must go. I must get home. There must be something for me—a message—a letter. He could not leave me without a word. I could not stay. Don't try to keep me, Cynthia, I should go mad—”

Cynthia looked at her, and from her helplessly towards the professor. He was turning to leave the room, but she laid her hand on his arm with a detaining touch.

“Don't go! Stay and help. She can't go alone, and I dare not leave. It would be noticed, and upset mother. What can we do?”

She appealed to him with unconscious reliance, and again he proved worthy of her trust.

“You spoke of ‘Nannie.’ Who is she? An old nurse—a servant? Would not she—?”

“Of course! The very thing. How thoughtful you are. Beth, darling, Nannie shall take you home and stay with you till

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I follow. I'll come the moment I can. I'll bring your cloak, and find Nannie, and Professor Dauglish will telephone for a cab. Leave it all to us, dear. We'll manage for you."

Beth did not speak. Her face was set like a mask; she stood stiff and straight by her chair as if not daring to relax a muscle. When her cloak was brought she allowed herself to be wrapped in its folds, led down-stairs and put into the cab without speaking a word. The horror of Stamford Reid's disclosures had for the moment a paralysing effect, but the strong, kindly face of the woman by her side showed that she would have the right sort of helper when the inevitable collapse arrived.

The cab had been brought round the drive to the side door of the house, and Cynthia and the professor stood for a moment watching it depart. Then with a shiver the girl drew back and stood confronting him in the deserted passage. From afar could be heard the echo of music in the big drawing-room; the sound of voices from the hall. Cynthia's cheeks had lost their flush, she looked white, and tired, and pitiful, a very different creature from the sparkling, self-confident young woman of an hour before.

"And this," she said slowly, "this is your initiation into the band of youthful revellers! This is the frolic which I invited you to share—this awful tragedy, the ruin of Beth's life! You have been a great help, Professor Dauglish, and I'm grateful—but it's hard that such a task should have fallen to a stranger! It's a miserable ending to your evening—"

"No! If I have helped at all, that's better than trifling. Don't trouble about me, think of yourself. You mustn't let your mother see you like this! Let me take you to have some refreshment, or send it up to you in your own room. Do you feel able to go back to your guests?"

"I must!" Cynthia lifted her hands to her face and rubbed her cheeks with a vigorous, natural gesture which brought a sparkle of light into the professor's grave eyes. "If I disappeared there would be a fuss, and I couldn't stand a fuss just now. Mercifully I kept the idea of a dance as a surprise to be sprung at the last moment. No one knew of it but Beth, and I can't dance to-night; I'll tell mother that I've changed my mind, and the people will soon disperse. By twelve o'clock I ought to be able to get away . . . Oh, how awful it

seems—I can't believe it! Mr. Elliot to bring trouble on innocent people, and then run away to save himself. So mean—so despicable! Beth can never love him again—"

Professor Dauglish looked at her with a long, steady glance.

"I hope she can, I hope she will. Don't be too hard, Miss Charrington! The principal difference between Mr. Elliot and other men is that he has been found out, and they have not! We have all been rash and foolhardy, and—yes! cowardly too, in our time, but we have scraped through and learnt our lesson; he hasn't, poor fellow, and it will go hard with him, hard enough without the loss of his daughter's love. Wait at least until you are sure of facts before you judge."

"Oh!" the girl impatiently shook her bright head, "I can't; I can't be calm and prudent. I can only *feel*, and to-night I'm all smarting and on edge. Mr. Bennet knew of this; he wanted to get Beth safely away before the news leaked out. You were right, and I was wrong, but how clumsy he was, how blind, and blundering! Are my cheeks pink now? Shall I do?"

She lifted her face to his in child-like inquiry, and he bent downwards studying it with grave deliberation.

"Another rub, I think. Higher up! Nearer the eyes."

"There!" The blood mounted swiftly beneath the movements of the strong little hands. "Surely that's right. I won't have any refreshments just now, thank you. I must see mother and tell her about the dance, and do my duty to the guests. They will be wondering what has become of me."

The professor was really a dear. He had blossomed out wonderfully this evening, and been a tower of strength during this last tragic half hour, but in the midst of all her anxiety and distress Cynthia's thoughts flew back to Stamford Reid; she longed restlessly to meet him again, speak to him, meet his eyes, hear the sound of his voice. It would be intolerable to sit chained up in the dining-room, with another man, and see him perhaps but a few yards away, hanging about waiting till she should be free!

She led the way back to the crowded hall, and with a little bow and a strained attempt at a smile, turned aside, and hurried to her mother's side.

"Mother—one minute! I've changed my



"Mrs. Charrington looked at her keenly."
"Cynthia—you know!" "Know what?"—p. 110.

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mind. I don't want to dance. Let them go home as soon as supper is over."

Mrs. Charrington looked at her keenly, but there was no surprise in her expression.

"Cynthia—you know!"

"Know what?"

"About—where is Beth?"

"Oh, you know, too! She has gone home. I sent her off quietly with Nannie. Who told you?"

"Mr. Bennet; but there have been other late arrivals. I fear it is leaking out. We must do our best to stop the report. I'm so thankful she has gone. It's dreadful, dreadful; but we must forget it, darling, for the next hour. Our duty is to our guests. Then we'll talk!"

She laid her hand with a momentary pressure on the girl's arm, then turned to address a group of guests. Her eyes were bright, her smile unclouded, her manner easy and charming as ever; and two-and-twenty looking on felt a throb of disapproval. Was it possible to feel deeply and preserve such an appearance of calm? Suppose positions were reversed, and she herself were in Beth's place, would her friends also laugh and chatter commonplaces? If they did, could she ever believe in them again?

Cynthia turned aside, the colour already paling on her cheeks, her lips drooping with unwanted pathos, and, to her delight, beheld Stamford Reid standing close at hand, evidently waiting for an opportunity to join her. There was a convenient break in the crowd, and it seemed the most natural thing in the world to the two young people to take advantage of the opportunity to seat themselves in the recess of a corner window, which afforded comfortable seating for two and no more.

Beth's father was ruined and disgraced; Beth's heart was broken. Theoretically, Cynthia's heart was broken with hers; nevertheless, it beat high at that moment, and a feeling of rest and ease took the place of the former distress. It was as if on climbing up a precipitous crag she had suddenly reached a green, sunlit plateau, where she could rest and be thankful. She listened to the young man's opening words with an eager air.

"I have been waiting for you to come back. It seemed an age. I am so dreadfully ashamed. Can you manage to forgive me?"

"Forgive you? For what?"

"Blurting it out like that! Breaking it so cruelly to that poor girl."

"It was my fault. I made you go on, and you couldn't know. How were you to know?"

"I might have guessed sooner than I did, but I took for granted that it was Macnaught. I thought she was interested in Macnaught. It never occurred to me for a moment that she could be Elliot's daughter. What has become of the poor girl?"

"She has gone home, and I shall follow and spend the night with her. We are more like sisters than friends, and I couldn't leave her alone. Is it—very bad? Is there no chance that he may—come back?"

The young man shook his head.

"Too late for that! He has burned his boats. He won't come back unless he is forced. What is there to come back to, but ruin and disgrace?"

"His daughter!"

Reid shrugged his handsome shoulders.

"She will be better off without him. Things will be hushed up much sooner if he escapes, and he must have relations who will look after her, and give her a home. You knew him well, I suppose, Miss Charrington? What sort of a man was he? I only knew him by sight. Could you have imagined that he would be mixed up in a case like this?"

Cynthia made a puzzled little grimace.

"I don't think I ever—thought! I'm not interested in fathers! He seemed to be dull and grumpy—an uninteresting appendage to Beth. As a personality on his own account I never gave him a thought. One doesn't, you know, when there are thirty years between!"

They looked at each other, and involuntarily smiled. The girl's keen, beauty-loving eyes noted afresh the line of the well-cut profile; the handsome chin, cleft with the faint mark of a dimple; the close, small ears; the carefully manicured hands. How handsome he was; how distinguished! It was a pleasure to see him. The man read her admiration, and returned it with tempered fervour. Quite a nice girl. Good hair. Easy to talk to. Pity the evening should be smashed up like this!

Aloud he said severely:

"I can't understand a man playing the fool as he has done. I'm told he had quite a fair average business if he could have been content not to plunge. And to risk

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it all, to risk being turned into a hunted outcast by a turn in the market—it's incomprehensible!"

"It's a strange thing," said Cynthia dreamily; "only a few hours ago I was declaring that I *did* understand. Risk attracts me; it always has done. I horrified my mother by saying that I had a gambler's spirit."

Apparently Mr. Stamford Reid was shocked in his turn. His handsome brows narrowed in a frown, and his mouth set. His literal nature took no discount from the words, and they jarred at once against his feelings and his taste.

"I hope you are mistaken," he said coolly, and Cynthia felt a pang of regret. When reproved or contradicted, it was her usual habit to wax sevenfold more emphatic in the repetition of her opinion; but with this man she felt a strange new humility—a keen longing to please, and to stand well in his eyes. Now with unconscious acting she turned upon him her

sweetest, most girlish look, and hastened to wipe away the bad impression.

"I think, after all, my rashness is mostly confined to speech. I say so many things that I don't mean, or only half mean. One of the reasons why Miss Elliot and I are such good friends is that we seem the complement of each other in so many ways. She steadies me, and keeps me up to the mark; and I"—the curving lips tilted humorously—"I shake her up! It's good for us both."

"Quite so." The handsome face remained stolidly unmoved. Cynthia felt a little chill, and asked herself uneasily if he were really uninterested. Had the conversation been too personal? But, then, what could he expect, so soon after that tragic *dénouement*? She waited anxiously for Reid's next words, leaving it to him to introduce another subject. The silence lasted for a long minute, then the young man made a startling remark:

"Miss Elliot is a lovely girl!"



"That evening for the first time she put her fears into words, and demanded sympathy from her husband."—p. 144.

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"Beth!" Unfeigned amazement rang in Cynthia's voice. She was pretty; Beth was plain. So much had been decided in girlish conclave, with the requisite disclaimer on one side, and the requisite lament on the other, and thereafter the verdict had been irrevocably fixed. Yet here was Stamford Reid describing Beth in terms of superlative praise.

"Lovely! How? Do you mean in the—the American sense?"

"And what may be the American sense?" An indescribable inflection in the voice testified to the speaker's disdain of Yankee tamperings with the English language. Cynthia's own voice grew apologetic to match.

"We have so many Americans in Liverpool. There are more than twenty here to-night. They use 'lovely' to describe character. It means sweet, amiable, attractive. A lovely woman may be quite plain in looks."

"Indeed! No doubt Miss Elliot possesses all those qualities in addition, but I was speaking of her appearance."

"She would be pleased if she could hear you!—and surprised."

"Does that mean that she is not usually admired?"

"I never heard anyone call her pretty before!"

"I should not call her pretty myself."

Cynthia's fingers tightened over her fan. Her lips stiffened, so that it seemed quite an effort to smile; yet she must smile, she must look pleased. How mean, how despicable she must be, to feel a pang of jealousy of Beth—poor, heart-broken, forsaken Beth! If she were a real friend she would be happy instead of sad. Suddenly she was happy; the finer side of her nature rose up, and conquered the grudge. In a sweet, natural voice she said:

"I'm glad you think so. All girls love to be admired. It's inborn. Sometime I'll tell Beth what you said. It will be as good as a tonic."

"But please leave me out of it! Tell her what you like, but don't mention my name."

"No, certainly not. I can promise that."

She was glad to promise; glad that Beth should not know that it was Stamford Reid who had praised her so enthusiastically.

"I—I wonder what she will do. She will be poor, of course; but there must be something left. Enough to keep just one girl—"

"Men don't run away, and cut their boats behind them in this desperate fashion while there is something left, Miss Charrington." The young man smiled indulgently. This ignorance on worldly matters was in keeping with his conventional ideas of what was right and proper for young girls. He was in his element for the next ten minutes, expounding the technical features of the position with all the ardour of one whose knowledge was but of recent date, and Cynthia listened and said: "I see! I see!" at intervals, and in reality saw nothing but the handsome face and graceful figure; heard nothing but the tones of the soft, southern voice.

For the first time in twenty-two years she had come face to face with tragedy. The friend who was as dear as a sister was in dire distress, but Cynthia was happy—nothing seemed to matter; the curtained recess seemed a haven of peace and joy shut out from the storm of the world. She wished the hour could last for ever. That it need never come to an end.

CHAPTER IV

FACING THE ISSUES

THE next week seemed a blur of shock and pain. The letter which Beth Elliot had found awaiting her on her return from Mrs. Charrington's reception—the incoherent, heart-broken letter of a desperate man—had filled her heart with a new dread, which was all too soon to be realised. Mr. Elliot had not the courage to face the disaster which his own recklessness had brought about, and the next day brought the news that his lifeless body had been discovered in the bedroom of the country inn in which he had taken refuge. The newspapers published columns of details of the latest "Tragedy on the Flags," and the vendors shouted startling headlines in special editions beneath the very windows of the room where the dead man's daughter lay, stunned and broken.

There were hard words spoken in Liverpool that week concerning the man who had brought ruin upon his child, and then deserted her in her hour of need; but no one dared to breathe such a sentiment in Beth's hearing. When at the end of the week she rose from her bed and roused herself to look the situation plainly in the face, even Cynthia Charrington was con-

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scious of a feeling of strangeness and unfamiliarity. This was not the Beth whom she had known—easy-going, humorous, dilettante Beth, who could be twisted round one's finger, and led meekly in this direction or that, as it pleased the whim of her friend. This was a woman, and a woman who knew her own mind, and would plan her own life.

"Beth, darling, father said I was to tell you he has been going into your affairs while you were ill. There is no money left, but the furniture was settled upon your mother, and she willed it to you. Counting the pictures and the silver, it is worth about a thousand pounds. That can be invested to bring in forty pounds a year. It's shockingly little, but it's better than nothing, I suppose. He thought you would like to know."

"He is very kind. I am grateful to him for his trouble, but I shall not take it. It must go to the creditors with the rest of the effects."

"But it is *yours*, dear; it was left to you! That's just why men make these settlements, so that if trouble arises there may be something secured for their families. You have the right to keep it."

"Or to refuse it, if I prefer! I could not touch it, Cynthia. To hand that thousand pounds over to the creditors is the only thing I can do towards restoring father's good name. If I ever make more, it shall go in the same way."

Cynthia stared in miserable perplexity. Her heart was aching with sympathy, but she felt awkward and ill at ease. She who had always been the leader felt suddenly, hopelessly left behind. It was as if the craft of her life was still floating idly about in a sheltered backwater, while the current had swept her friend out to the great, wide sea.

There were so many things which she could not understand. Not once, but many times over, during that first awful week she had caught the same murmur from Beth's lips: "If I had loved him more! If I had only loved better!" It seemed to Cynthia an incomprehensible wish under the circumstances. Surely it would have been harder for Beth if she had lost a dear, loving, cheery father, like her own, instead of that grim, silent man, who had seemed more of a task-master than a parent! Then as regards her future plans, Beth was most unreasonable and foolish. She would

not be helped; she would not be housed; she insisted upon cutting herself adrift from all the old associations.

"Dear child, life must be hard enough for you in any case for some time to come. Wouldn't it make it easier to be among friends who know and love you? Cynthia would love to have you here, and Mr. Charrington and I would love it, too. Stay with us, dear, if only for a few months, until you can see your way more clearly than at present!"

In different words Mrs. Charrington urged the same plea day after day, but Beth remained obdurate.

"I should like to stay near my friends, the two or three whom I really love; but against them there is the whole great army of acquaintances, and of people whom I don't know, but who know me. It is impossible to bury oneself in the suburb of a provincial city. How many times could I take a tram from Aigburth Road or Princes Park without meeting some one in it who would stare at me with commiserating eyes, or whisper about me to her friends? How many shopkeepers could I find who did not know the whole ghastly story as well as I do myself? What church could I attend without feeling myself an object of attention? I might go to another suburb, of course, where nobody knows me, but I should feel as strange and lonely there as in another city, without any of the stimulus of novelty. I can't face it, dear Mrs. Charrington! If I have to make a fresh start, I must do it thoroughly, in a fresh place, among fresh surroundings—"

"But for a few months, Beth; just a few months! You have had a great shock; it takes time to recover from the physical as well as the mental effects. Can't you settle down quietly just for a time?"

"Not here! Not here!" Beth was firm, and could not be shaken. "Besides, if I am to work, I ought to begin at once. There is no time to lose."

"But what do you propose to do?"

Ah! that was the rub. Beth's pale face flushed; she jumped up from her chair, and paced the floor with restless, impatient steps.

"If only I knew! If only I knew! Oh! it is cruel to bring up a girl with no training—no preparation for a day like this if it should come. I have been to good schools; I brought home prizes; but what does it amount to, after all? A smattering

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of French, a smattering of German, a smattering of music, a smattering of painting—not one single solitary thing that I can do *well*; nothing in which I am not a hopeless amateur! There's no place in the world for amateurs nowadays."

Then Cynthia put in a word of comfort.

"Well, I have always thought you wonderful! There are so many things you can do. You kept house splendidly—everyone said so; and you are so clever with your hands, and so inventive, and managing,

"Oh-h—stay with us, and we'll consult. I'll think of something if you give me time. Something splendidly original—something no one else has ever tried before!"

"I wish you would! But I can't stay here. I can't stay in Liverpool."

"Perhaps we could go away. Perhaps we could take a little tour. I must speak to Edward."

Mrs. Charrington's kind heart was bent on "mothering" Beth until her nerves should have had time to recover from the



"Cynthia looked at her with a shock of surprise . . . At this moment Beth did look lovely"—p. 148.

and methodical. The cleverest, all-round girl I know!"

"Alack-a-day it's not the all-round people who are wanted; it's the specialist, who can do one little thing better than anyone else."

"Then you must specialise, of course. That's easy," said Cynthia with her masterful air; whereat Beth gave a flickering of her old smile.

"Certainly, ma'am. What in?"

first shock of the tragedy which had changed her life; but even as she spoke the words she was conscious of Cynthia's quick turn of the head, the hard compression of her lips. Cynthia did not wish to leave home. She who, as a rule, hailed every possibility of change, was annoyed at the proposal. The suspicion which had taken shape on Mrs. Charrington's birthday might spring once more into life. That evening for the first time she put her fears into

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words, and demanded sympathy from her husband, but it was not forthcoming.

"Cynthia fascinated by the *beaux yeux* of young Reid! I'm not surprised. Why shouldn't she be?"

"Why should she be?" Mrs. Charrington's voice had a note of indignation. "There's nothing fascinating about him—conventional, prosaic, self-satisfied. I never met a duller man."

Edward Charrington laughed good-naturedly. He was a kindly looking man, with shrewd grey eyes looking out beneath tufted grey eyebrows, and a slight beard hiding a square chin; a strong face, yet tender withal. The lips twitched with humour as he looked at his wife's anxious face.

"My dear, you mistake! He has a fine figure, a dimpled chir, and an admirable tailor, possessions which weigh more heavily in the scales of two-and-twenty than any solid mental equipment! Of course, Cynthia admires him. Any natural girl would. Why vex yourself about so simple a thing?"

"If it were only admiration! Cynthia is not the sort of girl who is given to imagining herself in love. I have never known her trouble her head about a man before, but she does think about him; she is self-conscious when he is mentioned. She does not want to leave home and the chance of meeting him. Could you bear to see Cynthia married to a stick!"

"I should not choose it, but why leap so far ahead, and trouble yourself about what may never come? I expect we shall have half a dozen of these passing fancies before the real thing comes along. Take it lightly, dear, and, above all things, don't interfere! Keep them apart as much as you can, without showing your hand, but don't let Cynthia have any suspicion of what you are about, or that dimpled chin will become more irresistible than ever. I'm not at all sure that the best plan might not be to throw them together, and let her have a chance of becoming thoroughly bored!"

"She's not bored at all. I watched her the other night when they were talking together. She hung on his words as if they had been pearls of wisdom."

Mr. Charrington laughed again.

"She didn't hear them, dear; only a pleasant southern accent making an agreeable accompaniment to her thoughts. Remember your own youth! It will do Cyn-

thia no harm to develop a little sentiment—give her softness, make her less cock-sure. Don't worry your dear head. Things will work out all right."

But mothers do not dispose so easily of their daughters' love affairs. Mrs. Charrington spoke no more on the subject, but she could not succeed in dismissing it from her thoughts. She did her utmost to carry out the proposed tour, but circumstances were against a prolonged absence. Mr. Charrington could not spare more than a fortnight from business. Beth was obstinately set upon beginning her new life without delay, and Cynthia suddenly developed an ambition to join a course of University Extension Lectures, which would necessitate her presence at home. The utmost that could be arranged was ten days on the south coast, and the remaining four in finding some suitable lodgment in town, whence Beth could begin that dreary proceeding called "looking round."

And then came a pleasant surprise. Mr. Elliot's creditors unanimously refused to accept the household effects which Beth had insisted upon placing to their credit. The chairman despatched so courteously worded an acknowledgment and appreciation of the girl's intention as brought a tear into Beth's eyes, but the refusal was definite and unanswerable; and, such is the blessed power of contrast, Beth felt passing rich to possess a whole forty pounds a year.

With this touching testimony of kindness from those who had been most wronged, the first weight of the burden shifted from Beth Elliot's shoulders. Instead of feeling a culprit, almost a criminal, afraid to walk abroad lest she be pointed out with accusing finger, she found herself thought of tenderly, praised for her loyalty and good intent, and generously considered in her hour of need. There had even been talk of a subscription on 'Change on her behalf, but that had been stopped at her own urgent request. The realisation brought healing balm to her soul; and however brave she had been in words, it was a mighty relief to be assured of an income, however small. Oh, the tales one had read, the heart-rending tales of girls who had gone up to London to seek their fortunes, only to languish in dreary lodgings the while their scanty funds grew steadily less and less. Oh, the heart-rending descriptions of dreary, ill-paid toil; of illness coming on and finding no provision.

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"But I shall have forty pounds! One need not starve on forty pounds. At the worst I can manage to live."

"Ye-es." Cynthia was privately of opinion that this guarantee detracted somewhat from the romance of the adventure, though even she had doubts of the possibilities of forty pounds in London. She had not yet succeeded in evolving the promised original career, although every day the conversation circled round the same subject.

"Massage!"

"I should hate it. My back would break, and I don't believe you could do any good if you hated it all the time."

"Photography!"

"I should need years of experience before I began to earn. I want to make money at once."

"Teaching!"

"Haven't enough patience for children, nor the qualifications for older girls. Besides, the salaries are so small."

"And the life so dull! I couldn't stand it myself. What you want is movement and variety, and the prospect of getting on, and some liberty to live your own life."

"True, oh, *ki-ss!* That's it to a T. The only question is—how is it going to be done?"

They looked at each other and laughed. It was Saturday afternoon; the sun shone in through the opened windows. They were young and strong, and, despite the grimness of the position, little flashes of the old gay humour began to make themselves felt. Change as change is dear to sweet-and-twenty, and in Beth's mind ran an undercurrent of curious thought. The curtain is about to lift on a new scene. What will it disclose? What part shall I play? With what other actors shall I be cast? Cynthia drew something extraordinarily like a sigh of envy as the two girls seated themselves before the daintily spread tea-table. Mr. and Mrs. Charrington had gone out for the afternoon, and it added to the pleasantness of the occasion to be alone together, and able to talk, unrestrained by any elderly presence. Since taking up her abode in the Charrington household, Beth had been careful to spend every afternoon in an upstairs room, safe from the intrusion of possible callers; but these were so rare Saturday afternoons, that neither of the girls had thought it necessary to speak a word of warning to the maid in attend-

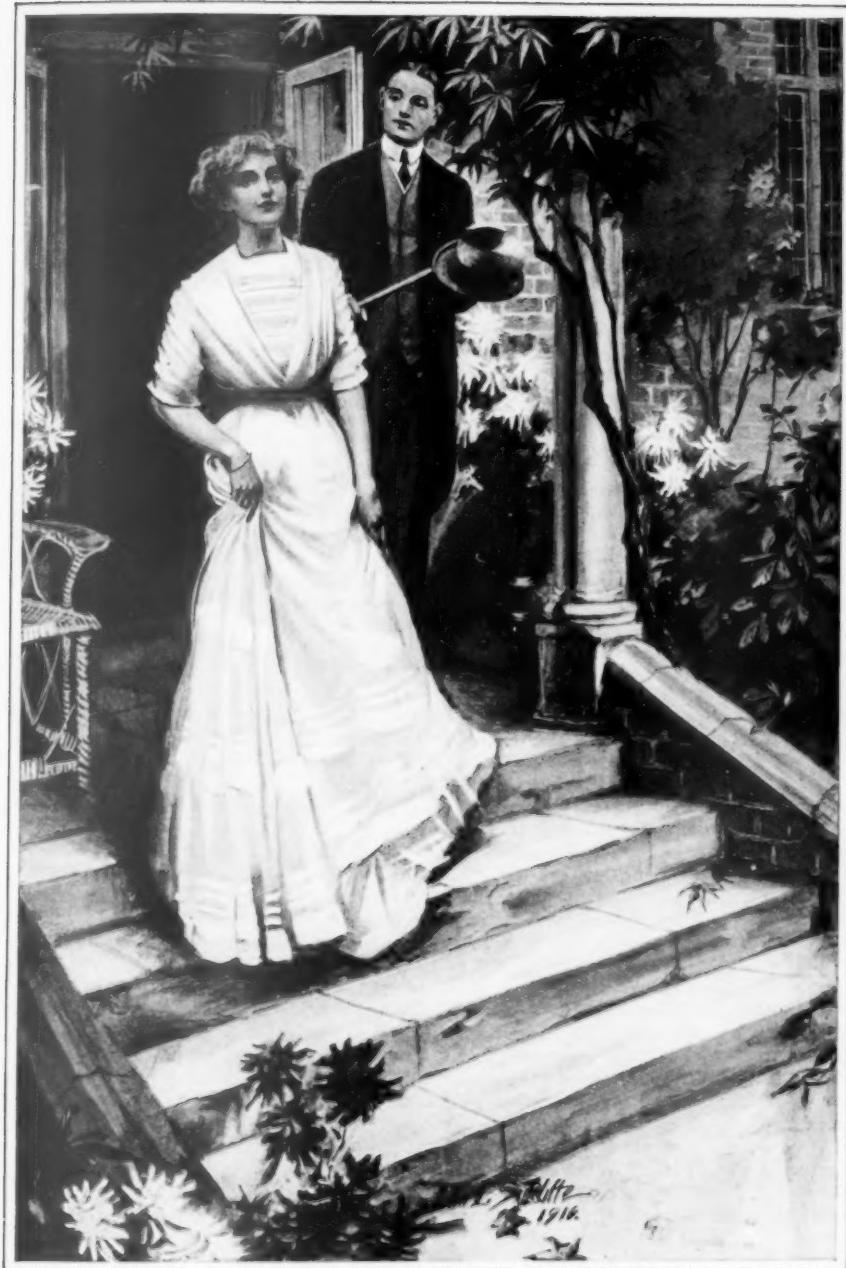
ance. They lolled back in their chairs, nibbled dainty cakes and wafer-like bread and butter, feeling as secure from interruption as though they had been locked behind iron gates.

"Mr. Stamford Reid!"

The door was thrown open, the name was pronounced, the young man was in the room before there was time to recover from the first shock of surprise. Both girls leapt to their feet, the one tingling with joy, the other cold and sick beneath a flood of bitter memories. Four weeks ago, under this very roof, this man had spoken the words which had wrecked her life; his face, his voice must always be inextricably woven with the memory of that grim hour. Beth felt trapped; her eyes measured the distance to the door; she would have given the world to fly from the room, but already Mr. Reid was shaking her by the hand; his voice was saying earnestly, hesitatingly: "I hope I haven't interrupted! I hope you won't let me interrupt. Don't let me drive you away!"

He was nervous, too. The thought brought with it a reviving courage. Beth re-seated herself, and made a pretence of eating; while Cynthia, very pink in the cheeks, and eager in manner, played the hostess at the tea-table, pouring forth a flood of quick, inconsequent talk. For her own sake she was overwhelmingly glad that Stamford Reid had chosen to call, but she felt sorry for her friend's discomfiture. How nice it would be if Beth went upstairs; how much easier to talk if her presence were removed! And then she blushed, and pressed fresh supplies of tea and cakes upon her friend, as if to make up for the mental disloyalty.

For the first few minutes conversation was somewhat fitful and strained, then gradually it slipped into easier channels. Even Beth recovered herself sufficiently to put in an occasional word, or to mark a sally with a smile. It was impossible not to feel soothed by the tactful consideration shown towards her by the young visitor. He sat with his chair pulled slightly in advance of her own, so that she could feel free from scrutiny; yet even so he seemed extraordinarily alive to her wants, taking her cup, offering more cakes almost before she had had time to realise her own needs. Once or twice, also, when she volunteered a remark, his quick glance was so courteous, so kindly, so *sorry*, that the old feeling of



"She led the way through the glass door, and Beth made no attempt to follow"—p. 149.

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offence was exchanged for gratitude. The conversation dallied with impersonalities until Cynthia introduced the subject of the proposed visit to the south, amplified by the almost inevitable explanation :

"And then to London to see Miss Elliot settled in her new home."

The young man turned with a start :

"You are going to live in London, Miss Elliot? In which part?"

"I don't know." Beth shook her head, trying bravely to smile. "Somewhere! It's a voyage of exploration, Mr. Reid. To seek my fortune."

"You are not going to friends? You are going alone? Surely not!"

"Yes, indeed. She is terribly independent. We have done our utmost to persuade her to stay with us, to make this her home, but she is adamant." Cynthia spoke with eager haste, and Mr. Reid's horrified expression deepened in intensity.

"But—forgive me if I am intrusive—what do you intend to *do*?"

"I don't know!" Once more came that pathetic little shake of the head. Beth's cheeks flushed beneath the young man's intent gaze. The fair tints of hair and skin took a new beauty from the contrast of the black dress; the pink flush on her cheeks seemed to give a deeper colour to the blue eyes. Cynthia looked at her with a shock of surprise, remembering Stamford Reid's words of admiration at their last meeting; realising that they were *true!* At this moment Beth did look lovely. A little colour, a little animation, a deepening of interest in the indifferent eyes, and behold the miracle was wrought, and the unnoticeable girl blossomed into beauty. Cynthia's gaze passed quickly to the young man's face, but he had no eyes for her; he was staring at Beth with more animation and feeling than she had ever before beheld on his somewhat impassive face.

"But—excuse me again, Miss Elliot—you will surely wait to have something definitely settled before you go! I suppose you have friends—plenty of friends—in town?"

"No; we are essentially a north country family. I could get introductions, of course, but I am not anxious for them. I shall have no time for social engagements."

"But if you want work, surely the best way to find it would be through people in your own world. Those registry offices

are besieged. What kind of post do you wish to take?"

The girls looked at each other, and involuntarily shrugged their shoulders.

"It sounds extremely stupid, but I can't tell you! I am waiting for inspiration. The worst of it is, Mr. Reid, there are so few marketable things which I *can* do. I am fairly well educated, but only fairly well; I have no special knowledge; no training for a profession. On the other hand, I want to earn a fair salary, and to earn it at once. It may not be an unusual position, but it's certainly baffling. Miss Charrington, who is nothing if not original, has been puzzling her brain on my behalf, but so far without success. It's a knotty point!"

"Perhaps Mr. Reid could suggest something," Cynthia said tentatively. Observant eyes would have found something pathetic in the look of credulous admiration which she cast at the young man. He was an oracle in her eyes; she would have taken his advice before that of the most learned and experienced; nay, what was even more striking, she asked it of him, when as a rule she felt the need of no guide beyond herself.

"I wish I could," said the young man simply. "I should like immensely to help Miss Elliot. I have a rich, eccentric, old aunt living in a flat in Mayfair. People have a craze for living in flats nowadays! I should say there are hundreds of them within a quarter of a mile of my aunt's abode. She's always grumbling about loneliness, or lack of service, or something of the kind. I should think she would be thankful to find someone experienced in domestic affairs—to-er-r-to help—" He broke off, obviously discomposed. "Of course, I was speaking entirely on my own responsibility. I don't know if my aunt would contemplate such a thing; but if she *did*—would you like, would you care—it would be shockingly dull, I'm afraid—but would you consent to live with her for a time?"

"In what capacity?"

"Er—er—" Mr. Reid blushed uncomfortably. It was really a most awkward position to discuss such subjects with this elegant-looking girl. He almost wished he had not made the proposition; and yet it would be uncommonly pleasant if she were really housed with Aunt Honoria, and a fellow had a chance of meeting her again.

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"It's difficult to say in what capacity. General all-round helper, I should say. Women who live in flats are always more or less alone; there's no room for families, so families keep away. There must be dozens of things to be done which an ordinary servant can't undertake. I suppose, after all, it comes down to the old post of lady companion, at forty or fifty pounds a year, and a dull time into the bargain! It's not ideal, but it's safe and comfortable, and posts are not easy to find. You would find 'looking round' a depressing process. What do you think of it, Miss Elliot? I have some influence with the old lady. Will you let me write?"

Cynthia's heart seemed to stop beating. An *aunt*! Beth Elliot installed on terms of intimacy with a member of Stamford Reid's family. Meeting him on each of his visits home; after his return to town continuing on terms of intimacy. Beth, whom he had met under such dramatic circumstances; whom he had described as "a lovely girl." The two-edged sword of jealousy stabbed Cynthia's heart. She clasped her hands beneath the table, steadying herself to hear Beth's words of thanks, of grateful consent.

But they did not come. To the amazement of both her companions, Beth had none to give. She looked the young man full in the face, and a flash of something like amusement lit up her blue eyes. Instead of being overpowered by such kindly consideration on her behalf, there was positively an air of condescension in her manner:

"You are very kind. I am most grateful for the thought, but pray don't trouble your aunt on my behalf. I shouldn't care to be a companion to an old lady, and I'm sure the old lady wouldn't care for me. I must think of something else."

Stamford Reid bowed in silent acquiescence. A tinge of colour showed in his pale cheeks, his lips tightened; he was evidently far from pleased with so cursory a rejection of his services. As for Beth,

she leant forward on her seat, her lips parted, her brows knitted in thought, the light in her eyes growing ever brighter and more alert. Of what was she thinking? She had just refused an offer of help; yet from her expression one would have supposed that her difficulties had been suddenly swept aside.

Cynthia stared in a bewilderment which had in it more than a touch of offence; then with a little toss of the head turned towards her guest, towards whom Beth had behaved so ungraciously. She would take him away where she could have him to herself, and soothe his ruffled feelings:

"Do come and admire our daffodils, Mr. Reid! We are inordinately vain of them. They are our gardener's speciality. He always takes the first prize at the show."

She led the way through the glass door, which opened out of the drawing-room, and Beth made no attempt to follow. The air was sweet and fragrant; the flowering plants were massed together in glowing banks of colour; the girl herself was so pretty, so gracious, so obviously eager to atone for her friend's rebuff, that it was not in masculine nature not to respond with words equally gracious; with appreciative glances from handsome grey eyes. That quarter of an hour was unmitigated happiness to one of the two, at least; and when it came to an end and Cynthia re-entered the drawing-room after bidding adieu to her guest, she was lost in a golden day-dream, in which there was no room for problems of every-day life.

It was a surprise to find her friend seated in almost the same attitude as that in which she had been left twenty minutes before; buried in thought, her chin resting in the cup of her hand. But at the opening of the door Beth sprang to her feet, and ran impetuously forward:

"Cynthia! Cynthia! congratulate me! I've found it! I've found it! Mr. Reid has showed me the way. I have found my career!"

[End of Chapter Four]



Beside the Still Waters

God's Nobility

GOD made all hearts, but some we find
More full of love, more true, more kind;
Hearts that for ever strive to bear
The burden and the weary care
Of those who suffer and are weak;
Nor ever ask reward or seek
For any recompense save love,
Giving themselves that they may prove
That sacrifice is greatest good,
And sympathy is Heaven's own mood.

EVELINE YOUNG.



Beyond the Sight

IT is a good thing that there are stars out of sight. If we could see everything in God's great universe with the naked eye, we would sit down and, lost in contemplation of the beauty revealed in earth, sea, and sky, would let the years slip by in a sweet doing nothing.

But suppose some day the eye catches the gleam of a new light out yonder where we fancied there was nothing but blank space. Now we spring to our feet, build a telescope and turn it heavenward to see what the strange planet is like. Bigger and bigger grows our glass now until we have captured and brought back the farthest wandering star. The star just beyond our sight has led us on to all the victories we ever have won.

If there were no stars beyond our sight in the Christian life, we would be but poor creatures. Satisfied with present attainments, we would tire of our very selves and sink down into absolute worthlessness as servants of the living God. But we know there is something better than we have ever

seen. Our hearts long for that better something. We feel ashamed of all we ever have known about God and the life He wants us to live. We are sure that a little farther on there are new and higher things. There must be, or it is all a failure. For we are such poor, imperfect Christians in our present attainments.

So we get up and reach higher. It is hard work at first. We have sat idle so long that our spiritual muscles have become stiffened and weak. But God gently puts His great loving arms about us and lifts us up till we begin to catch the gleam of the better things He has in store for those who love Him. Higher and higher still we rise until our eyes behold the splendour which glows on the hills of the higher life; nor is even this the best: higher and higher still we rise until we are lost in the sunshine of God's love, there to rest for ever.—EDGAR L. VINCENT.



A Christmas Sermonette

"**T**HHERE was no room for them in the inn."

What thoughts do these words awaken in the mind? Perhaps the first may be this, that no wonder in so great a concourse of people, of all ranks, going up to be registered for taxes, there should be no room in the inn for the poor and unpretending Mother of the Saviour to be delivered of her first-born child. But the second thought may be that the world is like that inn, that amidst its pomp, its magnificence, amidst the whirl and hurry of its business, amidst the marble edifices of its gigantic triumphs, amidst its enterprises, amidst the crowd and pressure

BESIDE THE STILL WATERS

of even its neediest inhabitants, there is not room for the Saviour of mankind.—W. E. GLADSTONE.



What Makes a Great Life

DO not try to do a great thing; you may waste all your life waiting for the opportunity which may never come. But since little things are always claiming your attention, do them, as they come, from a great motive—for the glory of God, to win His smile of approval, and to do good to men.

It is harder to plod on in obscurity acting thus than to stand on the high places of the field, within the view of all, and do deeds of valour at which rival armies stand still to gaze. But no such act goes without the swift recognition and the ultimate recompence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

To fulfil faithfully the duties of your station ; to use to the uttermost the gifts of your ministry ; to bear chafing and trivial irritations as martyrs bore the pillory and stake ; to find the one noble trait in people who try to molest you ; to put the kindest construction on unkind acts and words ; to love with the love of God even the unthankful and evil ; to be content to be a fountain in the midst of a wild valley of stones, nourishing a few lichens and wild flowers or now and again a thirsty sheep ; and to do this always and not for the praise of man, but for the sake of God—this makes a great life.—F. B. MEYER.



He Loveth Thee

OH! there is a voice in love ; It speaks a language which is its own : it has an idiom and a brogue which none can mimic ; wisdom cannot imitate it ; oratory cannot attain unto it ; it is love alone which can reach the mourning heart ; love is the only handkerchief which can wipe the mourners' tears away. And is not the Holy Ghost a loving Comforter ? Dost thou know, O saint ! how much the Holy Spirit loves thee ? Canst thou measure the love of the Spirit ? Dost thou know how great is the affection of His soul toward thee ? Go measure Heaven with thy span ; go weigh the mountains in the scales ; go take the ocean's water, and tell each drop ; go count the sand upon the sea's wide shore ; and, when thou hast accomplished this, thou canst tell how much He loveth thee. He has loved thee long. He has loved thee well, He loved thee ever, and He still shall love thee : surely He is the Person to comfort thee, because He loves.—C. H. SPURGEON.

He that Endureth

WHEN Scoresby was selecting his men to accompany him in his Arctic explorations, he needed sailors that could stand the severest exposures, and who had nerve to bear the worst trials. So every man who applied to accompany the expedition was made to stand barefooted on a great block of ice while the surgeon examined his body, and Scoresby inquired into his past history. Scores were rejected at once, as they had not nerve to endure the test. The men who stood the trial made up a band of the most glorious heroes. So sometimes God tries us when he has in store for us some great undertaking. Many faint and excuse themselves from the start. Some endure, and make the heroes and leaders of the Church.—VAIL.



The Good Things

TELL me all the good you can about the people you know. Tell me only the good about the people of whom you speak. Tell me the things which will make me think well of the people and of life. Tell me the things which will make my sun shine, my heart glad, and my soul to rejoice.—EDWARD FRANKLIN REIMER.



A Lesson

MY happiness went from me, and I sighed
That bliss so fair
Should, all too fleetingly, have passed and
died
In black despair.

*The world was dreary, cold, where joys were
not
It seemed to me ;
I railed impotently against my lot
In misery.*

*Until I learnt that there was much to do
To soothe the grief,
The trials and anguish other people knew
And give relief.*

*To smile with others, hiding my distress
Of heart and pain,
And striving thus, at length my happiness
Returned again !*

LESLIE MARY OYLER.



IT seems to me it is the same with love and happiness as with sorrow—the more we know of it the better we can feel what other people's lives are or might be, and so we shall only be more tender to them and wishful to help them.—GEORGE ELIOT.



"WILFIE"

A Story of Pride and Nobility

By BREND A ELIZABETH SPENDER

(Illustrated by STEVEN SPURRIER)

"SHE can't come! It's a physical impossibility," said Wilfred Rippingdale, standing feet apart, chin well up, upon the hearthrug. His mother busy at the tea-table made no reply, and as she was in the habit of agreeing with his every proposition, he missed the justification of her assent and repeated himself, "It's a physical impossibility! By Jove, I'm not a snob, I wouldn't hurt the old gir's feelings for anything, but upon my word it's a bit rough on a fellow. Why the dickens did she want to go and be *my* grandmother? She is an anachronism, that's about what she is, isn't she?"

"She is rather a nuisance." Mrs. Rippingdale was not quite sure that "anachronism" was a nice expression for a lady to use, and she was far too clever to confess the doubt. She looked across the warm lamp-lit room at her tall son's flushed boyish face and her hard, grey eyes softened a little. "It is strange to think of her as *your* grandmother, Fred. It was never so strange to think of your father as her son, and he was a clever man. I suppose it is your going to college and your friends, and all those sort of things."

Her son winced a little and blamed himself for it immediately. "Those sort of things" was a common enough error. He had heard the Warden's wife say it once, and really his mother, tall and stately in her long black robe and her snow-white widow's collar and cuffs, was a far more refined figure than the Warden's wife, who, poor

lady, was haunted and daunted at every turn by a tendency to *embonpoint*.

"She seems to be a—a—sort of prehistoric peep—I mean it seems as if she had slipped down here from somewhere in the remote past. I know that I'm talking rot, mater; I don't forget that father started in life as a draper's errand boy, but he adapted himself to circumstances. You and I fit into out places in the world as well as anyone else, but she—she never would even try to change, to keep abreast of things, would she?"

"Never." Mrs. Rippingdale used the muffineer somewhat ostentatiously, for she had only added it to her silver a week or so ago on reading in a well-known ladies' paper that "in all big houses a muffineer is now always brought in with afternoon tea." "I remember soon after you were born, when your father began to see what your future would be and how very well the business was turning out, that he made her the kindest offers—a villa in the Easton Road and a maid or two, I am not quite sure which. She refused absolutely, said that where her 'man' had died she would die too; and that as he'd lived she would live; and that with a maid she would be miserable 'sitting and twiddling my fingers all day long, looking for something to clatter about like a lady'—those were her expressions."

Fred jerked his head back with a gesture of impatience. "I liked her when I was a little chap," he said. "I didn't seem to see

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her faults then. I believe I was quite fond of her. By James, though, I remember coming back once from school—I'd forgotten things at home a lot, I suppose, and she was a bit of a shock to me. Now just fancy introducing her to Johnny Bliss, and seeing her make him a curtsy with that bonnet on, that comes down all over her ears, and a nice red and grey knitted comforter thing—'cross-over,' isn't it?—on her chest, and hands like a witch in *Macbeth* with 'choppy fingers'! She'd call him 'sir,' too! Just think of it, and his mother's mother, the Countess of Torquet, is a lovely woman still. Sometimes I can't believe that I am her descendant, that some of her blood, silly, countrified, blundering blood in old bonnets, is in my veins!"

He spoke with a kind of angry impatience, and regarded his right hand held out before him with a sort of distaste, as though if it dared to confess in outward form to one feature inherited from his paternal grandmother he would have a very great mind to throw it away and do without it. His mother missed the self-scorn which underlay his words and occasioned their vehemence.

"I got her a bonnet once, my dear." She handed him his tea and interrupted his study of the extended hand. "She sent it back, said she should catch cold with that little 'wisp' on her head, thanked me, I ought to admit, very nicely." Mrs. Rippingdale drew close to her big son and put her hand caressingly upon his shoulder. "Don't worry yourself, my dear boy; of course she will be disappointed, she has dined with us on Christmas Day for years, your father always insisted; but this time, with your friend coming, and he so well connected, his father Lord Wedderjoy, and his mother the Earl of Torquet's daughter, why, it's simply ridiculous. I shall tell her that we can't have her, and there's an end of it all. What time did you say that Mr. Bliss would get here to-morrow?"

"He says about tea-time. Christmas Eve traffic won't delay him as he's motoring, you know." Wilfred Rippingdale put down his cup and stared at the fire with moody eyes. "I say, mater, you'll be gentle to old Gran, won't you? Butter her up a bit. I'll make some excuse and run round and see her for half-an-hour on Christmas Day if she likes. Oh, I say, why can't a fellow choose his own ancestors!"

An hour later he repeated the same sentence mentally with a rueful smile at the futility of its aspiration as he turned away, having no wish to be present at the coming interview, and left his mother standing at the door of old Mrs. Rippingdale's cottage. It was a small place, almost mean-looking, standing in one of the back streets of the sleepy little county town. No idyllic garden-plot divided it from the road, and the roses and jessamine which generally oblige popular authors by climbing up their brain-built cottages, were represented only by an ivy plant sadly out of repair and seeming to shrink and shiver in the bitter air. Yet it wore a cheerful look, for a red blind was drawn down in the window, and the light behind silhouetted upon it in sharp black shadow three or four pots of lusty geraniums and a holly twig which, to recall to passers-by the coming of the time of festival, lay against the window catch. Wilfred's mother, pushing open the door in response to a low-spoken "come in," entered at once, with no interval of porch or passage, a little room darkly papered, but bright with the light of a cheap lamp and a ruddy fire. She knew that cottage interior very well, at least as far as the front kitchen was concerned, for she had seldom permitted herself to penetrate any further, and sometimes found it unpleasantly recalled to her memory by the cottages in her district, when the thought of her husband's mother's home was apt to shake most disconcertingly the safely superior attitude of mind with which the mental picture of her own drawing-room could always supply her. She latched the door behind her and undid her furs, looking across the room at the bent figure by the fireside.

The elder Mrs. Rippingdale had risen eagerly but stiffly to her feet, and as she shaded her eyes with one thin hand looked expectantly into the shadowed corner behind her daughter-in-law's figure. She sighed softly as she moved her hand away from her forehead and rested it on the edge of the small round table at her side.

"It's you, is it, Polly, my dear? Now that's kind of you to come and see me, to be sure. Sit yourself down. I was looking for Wilfie, so I was. I made sure I heard his step."

Mary Rippingdale took a chair and



"Having no wish to be present at the coming interview, he left his mother standing at the door of old Mrs. Rippingdale's cottage"—*p. 153.*

scraped it along the tiled floor until she had placed it at due distance from the fire, in spite of the old woman's invitation to draw close.

"I'm warm enough," she said ungraciously.

"Are you so, then?" The grandmother held her wrinkled hands out to the blaze and laughed a little. "I likes a fire, I do. Seems like I can't get warm through. The house don't seem alive until the fire be going, do it?" The daughter-in-law made no reply, and after a while the grandmother ventured another question. "Wilfie come home to-day, didn't he?"

Mary Rippingdale nodded, and answered, "Yes, to-day."

"Is un peart?" The old voice was tremulously eager.

"Oh, quite well, thank you. I don't suppose he will have time to come and see you to-morrow, he's booked to go skating, if the ice holds, with Dr. Raynor's girls, but he will run in and see you on Christmas Day if he can find time."

The grandmother moved uneasily after a moment's silence.

"You're forgetting, Polly, for sure," she said slowly, "he sees me at your house always on Chris'mus Day; he won't have

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no call to come round here." She waited, but the expected answer did not come.

"Wilfred is having a friend to stay with him, a young gentleman who is at the same college as himself. He is Lord Wedderjoy's second son, and very rich, and they are the greatest friends. His father and mother are abroad, so he has consented to spend Christmas here with Wilfred, and after that he is going on in his motor car to Sir Thomas Tadcaster's for the New Year."

A kind of awe came upon the old woman in the Windsor chair, she clasped her thin hands on the lap of her full black skirt.

"Why, you're real gentry, Polly, I do believe, you and Wilfie with your lord's sons a-coming to spend Chris'mus along o' you." Her faded lips drew into a doubtful smile. "I shan't hardly like a-sitting at your gran' table along o' the like o' he!"

Mary Rippingdale saw her opportunity and seized it ruthlessly.

"I thought you wouldn't be happy with us," she said, "so I decided not to ask you this year." She was conscious of a sudden look of hurt bewilderment in the patient eyes looking out from under the parted grey hair and the white-frilled old-fashioned cap, and her speech lost some of its deliberation. "I'll send you round a plum pudding and something nice in the way of poultry. A turkey would be too large, I think; would you like a duck or a chicken, and some dessert and things?" She stopped breathless, and a silence ensued which she had to break for herself when it became unbearable.

"Wilfred will come and see you—perhaps after church."

"Aye," the old woman answered dully; and then looking up sideways with something in her dim blue eyes almost cunning and yet half-pleading, being, as cunning often is, the appeal of the weak to the only method affording any hope of success. "Won't Wilfie mind it if his old Grannie isn't there?" Her hands worked in and out of each other on her knee. "Why, he's pulled the first cracker like with his Grannie ever since he could hold; I mind I held his little fingers and helped him pull many a time—." She interrupted herself with a little broken laugh. "He wouldn't like to miss his Grannie, would he now?"

"He agrees with me that you would not enjoy yourself."

Another longer silence.

"My only grandchild, mind you," said the old woman at last very softly, almost dreamily, and as though she spoke to a stranger. "His father, he was a fine lad, but all my other children, all the little ones—like so many flowers they was—wilted away these many years ago, but they'll come back at Chris'mus and speak to me. I shan't be lonely here where I rocked 'em by my own fireside."

"You'll be much better here by your own fire." Mrs. Rippingdale rose and adjusted her stole. "Of course you will. You're getting an old woman, Granny."

"Yes, an old, old woman," agreed the elder Mrs. Rippingdale obediently; and when her daughter-in-law had left her she said it over many times, looking into the dying fire. "Wilfie's grandmother's an old, old woman. Eh me, an old, old woman. It's a cold world somehow when a body's growed too old!"

Meanwhile Mrs. Rippingdale the younger, hurrying home through the frosty December night, congratulated herself upon the wise foresight which had dictated her visit to the cottage. A smile of satisfaction lifted her long lips and displayed the too even perfection of her teeth as she told herself that in such bitter weather it would have been most unwise for the silly old woman to venture out. It is a remarkable circumstance that so very often selfish plans reward their makers by proving after all to be infinitely for the good of others, and Mary Rippingdale was delighted with the thoughtful solicitude which she had shown for the welfare of her boy's grandmother.

Still more delighted was she on every account when John Bliss arrived, a little behind time, on Christmas Eve. She knew even as he bowed over her hand, that he was in all respects just such a man as Wilfred had described—a giant in height, with a fair boyish face, and wide-open, gay, Irish eyes which could laugh at everything under the sun and yet were infinitely kind. He had a way with him at once easy and unassuming. No dread ever lurked in Johnny Bliss's manly heart lest he should be mistaken for anything less than what he was—a gentleman. He was proud to acknowledge frankly that his grandfather's great newspaper had been the stepping-stone of the family fortunes, and having

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nothing to hide and nothing to fear never dreamed of looking for or suspecting skeletons of any description in the cupboards of his friends. An honest liking for Wilfred Rippingdale had made him glad to spend Christmas with him, and Wilfred's mother seemed, in his eyes, the kindest and least self-interested of women. He would have been considerably surprised and rendered absolutely miserable had he known that his hostess, as she passed into the dining-room that evening on his arm, with Wilfred, absorbed in hero-worship, bringing up the rear, thought to herself that now indeed she was stepping into that society for which she was most truly fitted, and he would have been appalled had he guessed that she was enjoying the crowning moment of a lifetime when, beneath the parlour-maid's very nose, she asked him, "And how was your grandmother, the Countess, when you heard from her last?"

Yet even a more glorious hour of triumph lay before her absolutely unsuspected by Johnny Bliss, when on the morrow all her hardy-won acquaintances, many of whom were to her as the very laurels of victory, saw her come into church with Johnny at her side. "The Honourable John Bliss, Lord Wedderjoy's second son. His grandmother is the Countess of Torquet, you know, and he is my son's dearest friend." She had found an opportunity of telling each and all of them during the preceding week, and perhaps she reached the highest flood-mark of happiness possible to such a nature as hers as she passed down the aisle and saw that every pair of eyes in the edifice forsook the holly wreaths and Christmas roses in the windows and the garlands of evergreen, which the sexton had hung askew, to cast envious and admiring glances at herself and her tall escort.

Even Wilfred was secretly a little pleased by the sensation which Johnny Bliss had unconsciously occasioned, though, to do him justice, his admiration of his friend was chiefly a not ignoble form of hero-worship, Johnny's rank merely imparting a kind of gilt to the substantial ginger-bread of his physical powers and personal perfections. More than once during the singing of the first hymn Wilfred looked across at the youngest of Dr. Raynor's girls and then sideways at his friend with an air of triumph which that young lady's

bright eyes hastened to acknowledge as fully justified.

When at last the congregation streamed out into the churchyard where the frost still sparkled on every stone, despite the efforts of a pale December sun, Mrs. Rippingdale executed a masterly stroke of policy. No dawdling at the gate that day, no handshakings, no introducing Lord Wedderjoy's son, amiable Johnny Bliss, who was ready to smile on every one, to her expectant friends. Familiarity should be given no opportunity for the propagation of contempt. She swept down the path like some stately queen, with now and then a condescending bow to left or right, and swept Johnny Bliss out of the churchyard in her train.

They had nearly reached home before she recalled Wilfred's promised visit to his grandparent; she felt that it was tiresome, but must be negotiated.

"Fred, dear, hadn't you better run round and see Granny before lunch, or rather dinner, I suppose one ought to call it that to-day. There will just be time, and I am sure Mr. Bliss will excuse you and put up with me for a little while?"

Johnny Bliss stopped short in the middle of the road to assure her of his delight at the prospect.

"Only," he said, "I was just wondering when it would put you out least if I slipped away for a few minutes. Yesterday I overtook an old lady on the road from Orcher-ton and gave her a lift home in the car. She'd been shopping there and tried to walk back, and she seemed a bit down on her luck. Some of her folks that she usually went to for Christmas couldn't put her up or something, and I promised I'd go round and see her. I thought it might buck her up a bit. She was a dear old lady, you'd love her I know, Mrs. Rippingdale."

Mary Rippingdale accordingly expended much sympathy on John Bliss's new friend, and racked her brain mightily to discover whom she could have been.

"An old lady, you say?" with an emphasis on the noun. "An old lady. I wonder who it was. Where did she live? It wasn't Miss Turly from Rosetown House, I suppose?"

John smiled down upon his handsome hostess. "I never noticed the name of the house. It wasn't a very grand-looking place, anyhow, and she didn't look very

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well-to-do. I hope you won't mind my trying to find her."

"Not at all! I think it's very sweet of you indeed. If she would like some port or anything, we could send it round. No don't thank me, oughtn't we to try to make others a little happier? It's Christmas-time, you know."

However, Johnny Bliss did thank her, and that heartily, and walked off beside Wilfred,

"Not a bit of it—don't I know the symptoms pretty well too, my boy?" Big John's laugh rang out in the crisp air. "She'd been getting the young cad a Christmas present—silver cuff links on a card and, by Jove, she thought they were so grand!"

"Does she—does she live down here?" Wilfred's voice trembled a little, for his friend, with one large hand on his shoulder, had steered him round the corner into the



"Yesterday I overtook an old lady on the road from Orcherton and gave her a lift home in the car."

expatiating on the kindness of Mrs. Rippingdale's heart.

"Your mater's a perfect brick," he said; "and, you know, anyone would have been sorry for this poor old soul. Seems she'd got a son or someone—can't have been a son, though, now I come to think of it, for she's quite an antique and she said he was a mere boy—and he'd got some swell friends coming to dinner with him and couldn't do with her. She didn't say it in so many words, but one could read between the lines. A duke was coming, she said, but I think the cold must have got into her head a bit!"

"Tipsy?" Wilfred suggested shortly. His face had grown a little anxious as his friend's tale proceeded.

very street where his own visit should have been paid.

"Down here on the right," John responded.

Wilfred commenced to walk more slowly; he wanted time to think. He began to see that Johnny Bliss's story fitted his own case all too well, and he had no desire to figure in his friend's eyes as "that young cad."

"The house had a red blind, that's how I'll run her to earth," said John inspecting the windows as he passed along. Even as he spoke, they came abreast of a cottage with a red blind drawn up in the window and a straggling ivy plant creeping round the sill. "Here we are then." Bliss pro-

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ceeded to tap lightly with his knuckles on the door. "Don't go on for a moment, Fred, just stay and wish the old lady a Merry Christmas."

Fred Rippingdale stood below on the pavement biting his lips in his perplexity.

"I can't!" he began desperately.

"But you must, I say." Bliss caught him by the sleeve and rapped again. Rippingdale struggled a little but ineffectually in his big friend's grasp. He was afraid to urge that he must go, afraid to own the truth. The sweat burst out upon his forehead, for at any moment his grandmother might come to open the door, when she would infallibly claim him as her grandson with no hesitating greeting, for she had not seen him, as he remembered with a touch of shame, since some time before the beginning of last term.

He muttered, "Let me go, I say," but Bliss remained obstinate; and the sound of a chair being pushed aside on the tiled floor within fired him with a sudden desperate courage. "Let me go, Bliss, I say. You duffer, how could I go on, seeing that she's my own grandmother? It's her house, and I've come on purpose to see her. Get in!" He pushed up the latch and dragged Bliss after him stumbling over the threshold into the little room.

Old Mrs. Rippingdale stood half-way between the fireplace and the door, her wrinkled face flushed into an aftermath of beauty, her trembling hands outstretched to welcome her grandson.

"Wilfie, me dear, me dear lad!" she cried tremulously; and in a moment he had his arms about her and had kissed her shrivelled cheek. Desperate fear of what John might be thinking lent him wit with which to disarm criticism.

"Grannie, this is Johnny Bliss my friend who is staying with me." His grandmother dropped the Honourable John a bob curtsy such as he had predicted, but somehow the awkwardness went out of the situation and a quaint air of old-world gallantry pervaded it when John took his cue from his hostess and, hat in hand, acknowledged her salutation shyly with a deep bow.

"It's the gentleman as give me a lift last night in one of them motor carts, so it is," said Grannie Rippingdale. "There now, there's strange it is that you should be Wilfie's friend!" A wistful, puzzled ex-

pression dawned in her faded eyes as she looked up at Johnny Bliss's fresh young face. "Why, you're nubbut a boy like our Wilfie here. I shouldn't be afeart o' you!"

"Afraid of me! I should hope not, Ma'am!" said Johnny in surprise. "What on earth should make you afraid of me? I'm—"

Wilfred interrupted ruthlessly. "John and I have come round, Grannie, to see if you wouldn't change your mind and come—I mean it's such a fine day it couldn't hurt you to come to dinner with us—I mean that mater sent us to see—mother wants you to." He broke off in desperation and put his arm round her shoulders, bending over her, "I mean it wouldn't be Christmas to me if you weren't there, Gran." He guessed what the words were that trembled on her lips and went on frantically, "Now don't say anything, Gran, not a word, but just that you'll come!"

It smote his heart with a great shame and a sudden realisation of the strength of the ties of blood as he marked how a light, brighter and sweeter than the light of youth, shone in her dim blue eyes. One thin old hand went up to his bowed head and caressed the parted dark hair. A tear trickled down her cheek, but she smiled and nodded across to Johnny Bliss.

"I knew as Wilfie couldn't do without his old Grannie on Chris'mus day!" she said.

She went away to put on her bonnet, that bonnet which came down right over her ears. Wilfred forgot to dread its appearance, he turned away, folded his arms against the high kitchen chimney piece, and rested his head upon them, sick at heart. Strangely enough the thought of Bliss's knowledge of their relationship had ceased to disturb him, the consciousness of how well she loved him and how little he had deserved such love oppressed him somewhat, but even that faded before the fear that perhaps in Johnny's eyes he had displayed himself as the thing he was. He remembered all too clearly some of Bliss's bold denunciations of snobbery, the rigid rule by which Johnny measured honour in himself and in his friends, his oft-repeated creed that "it isn't who a man is, but what he is, that matters," and his heart failed him. If his attempt to outwit Bliss had



"Wilfred looked down at the rag rug beneath his feet; once or twice he swallowed painfully and his face grew white. 'What's the matter, Fred, are you ill?'"—p. 100.

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not succeeded then good-bye for ever to a friendship which had meant more to him (he was at the age for passionate friendships) than he could well put into words.

It was Bliss who broke the silence, awkwardly enough, coming nearer. "I say, Fred, old man, it seems I didn't understand your grandmother yesterday. I got hold of the wrong end of the stick. I'm ashamed of myself for jumping to the worst conclusion as I did. It simply shows what a beast I am. Of course if I'd known that you were the grandson I should have guessed at once that there was some other reason—that you were afraid of getting her out in the cold at her time of life, and not any silly business about people coming—about me. Fred, I know I'm an ass, I always say too much or not enough, but I'd be awfully grateful—I called you a cad, you know—if you'd—shake!"

His voice was remorseful and sincere. He extended a big hand and Wilfred reached out and clasped it. Johnny with his own character as a guide had construed everything to Wilfie's favour—they were still friends. So they stood for a few moments face to face, Wilfred haggard, Johnny radiant with the genial kindness of his great nature. The painted clock on the mantelpiece ticked on monotonously, the firelight danced and flickered on the shining plates and dishes standing on the dresser at the opposite side of the kitchen. Wilfred looked down at the rag rug beneath his feet; once or twice he swallowed painfully and his face grew white.

"What's the matter, Fred, are you ill?"

"No." With a sudden movement Wilfred's head came up, he looked Lord Wedderjoy's second son squarely in the eyes, took his hand away from his friendly clasp, and stepped at that moment into his heritage of manhood. "I'm not ill, but I can't stick it that you shouldn't know. I made the mater tell Gran that we couldn't do with her for Christmas, and just now I lied to her and to you that you shouldn't guess. I was ashamed to own her as my grandmother, but it's come into my mind to-day that I ought to have been proud of her, that you would have been, in my place. Her husband was killed when my father was a baby and she brought him up all alone, worked for him, went out washing and charing." With the colour surging into

his cheeks but his eyes still undauntedly fixed upon Johnny's astonished face, he continued, "She did all that, kept this little home above his head with her two poor hands, and pinched and saved to give him his start in life, and I in my beggarly pride, I who have never done anything worth doing in all my life, I despised her, and we owe her everything! I thought that I was good enough to know you, Bliss, but that she wasn't—now you know. If you hadn't been so decent I might have kept on cramming to you, but when you begged my pardon it was a bit too thick. I'm a cad, as you said, and you—you don't care about knowing cads, do you, John?"

He broke off and turned away, sat down at the little round table and flung out his arms upon it with a gesture of despair, waiting so with his head bowed in the bitterness of his shame for what his friend would say. But the sentence of excommunication from Johnny Bliss's friendship was long in coming, and when at last he spoke his voice was strangely thick and husky.

"No, I don't like cads," he said, one big hand firmly clasping the young man's shoulder, "you can bet your boots on that, and I don't know any. You tried to be, and you couldn't." A note of triumph rang in his tone. "You couldn't! If it doesn't seem silly, Fred, old man, I should like to shake hands with you again!"

So old Mrs. Rippingdale found them when, with many creakings, she slowly and cautiously climbed down the stairs, clinging to the rail with trembling hands, and emerged from the cupboard-like recess where they terminated in all the glories of the bonnet and the cross-over, and with Wilfie's silver cuff-links safely bestowed in her pocket ready for presentation.

Her grandson and his friend fell apart as she came, feigning, as the habit of Englishmen is, to be most unconcerned and unemotional, and made great merriment and many pointless jokes over the simple process of locking the cottage door and entrusting the key to one of the pockets in Johnny Bliss's broad waistcoat. Then giving her an arm apiece and looking, as is also a common thing with the young sons of Albion, most remarkably pleased with themselves, they tramped away down the frosty streets, suiting their swinging strides to the slow, feeble steps of Wilfie's grandmother.

The Evils of Christmas Shopping

By ELIZABETH SLOAN CHESSER

CHRISTMAS is the season which calls forth kindness, charity and thought for others, the time of all the year when one might expect that a spirit of true Christianity would be displayed. We are all at our best because it is Christmas, the season of "peace and goodwill to all men." At least, we ought to be. But is it always so? Do we invariably display kindness, understanding and Christmas charity to our fellow creatures?

There is no virtue in the kindness which we lavish upon our own immediate circle of home people and friends. Any woman will expend energy, time and money in the service of those she loves, unless she is a very feeble, selfish type, incapable of loving anyone but herself. The real test is in a woman's attitude towards the outside world, towards the people whose circles touch hers for a brief moment in daily life. Does she try, when she can, to bring the joy of Christmas to the tired waitress who serves her tea on Christmas Eve? Does she give sympathy to the worn-out shop-girl, whose Christmas is a nightmare of exhaustion and overwork? How many women ever think of what Christmas means to the post-office clerks, the tea-shop girls, the shop assistants, standing through long hours behind the counter?

The Shop-Girl's Christmas Season

In truth, life is made up of contrasts, especially at Christmas time. A year ago, shortly before Christmas, I watched a nerve-racked shop-girl serving a customer. According to all the social standards of civilisation, the customer was a "lady." She was exquisitely dressed and good to look at. She wore magnificent furs, and had the soft cultured voice of an educated woman. I suppose she was quite unconscious of the fact that she was torturing an overwrought fellow creature beyond endurance. The girl, who was almost dropping with fatigue, had brought down five or six heavy boxes of lace goods for her inspection. She had patiently and with infinite

courtesy received the irritable comments of the exacting customer on everything displayed. On the completion of a very small purchase, which the girl proceeded to tie up as quickly as possible, the customer's impatience and hurry were strained to breaking point. The tired hands of the shop-girl jumbling with the string were not quick enough, and a torrent of sharp, unkind words added a little more to the burden and despondency of "only the shop assistant."

That is one picture amongst a thousand—one incident in shop life which is repeated so often during the rush of Christmas shopping. Do we ever think what the thoughtlessness of women shoppers at this season brings to the assistants, many of whom are so exhausted with the overwork and strain of the few days before Christmas that they spend Christmas Day itself in bed? Up till ten and eleven at night they are occupied with arranging goods, decorating their departments for the next day. Hour after hour they are on duty, with brief intervals for meals they are too tired to eat. The average shop-girl is not physically strong. After a few years of the work she is almost invariably anaemic, dyspeptic, subject to nerves. The rush of the Christmas season is too much for many of them, who break down in health, and yet dare not take the rest they need, because the market is so frightfully overstocked with shop assistants.

"Evil is Wrought by Want of Thought"

Who is to blame? The employer, the social conditions under which we live, the women who delay their Christmas shopping till the last moment, so that the rush at the end is almost overwhelming? Truly these last know not the evil they do. They do not realise that they are partly to blame for the rush and scramble, the crowded shops, the unpleasant atmosphere, which the assistants breathe twelve hours and more with only a few minutes' break for meals. Behind the bargain counters, gaily decorated with scarlet

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ribbon, Christmas mottoes and gleaming holly, these girls stand in rows, measuring, folding, making up bills and parcels, suggesting, helping to choose gifts for other people. They are wonderfully patient, wonderfully cheerful, but their tired eyes and flushed cheeks speak eloquently enough of strain and fatigue. Very few women would willingly and with intention bring misery, ill-health and trouble into the lives of other less fortunate fellow creatures. Many women shoppers are hard-working women themselves, who have laboured to make Christmas a happy time for their home circle. They are impatient often because their nerves are overwrought. They are quite unaware that they might prevent a vast deal of the overwork and exhaustion of the shop-girl if they cared enough to try.

An Appeal to Women Readers

In what way? First and foremost by getting their shopping well in hand early in December, so that it is finished a good week before Christmas arrives. If even every woman reader of this magazine makes and keeps that resolution, some good will follow. The congestion will be relieved, and a certain number of the shop assistants will benefit as a result. Each woman who gets her Christmas shopping finished early is eliminating one hurrying, exacting customer from the Christmas rush for tired assistants to serve!

The toiling, weary, feverish side of Christmas is so apt to be forgotten by those of us who are not, for the time being, in contact with that side of life. There are thousands of men and women whose Christmas is a season of unspeakable exhaustion because of the thoughtlessness of others. The Post Office officials, the clerks and postmistresses, the postmen—what does Christmas mean to them? The photographer, who has to work night and day to cope with the Christmas orders which might just as well have been given a month ago. What sort of Christmas is he fit to enjoy? Even the children are drawn into the rush and kept up till all hours, delivering parcels, running errands, until they are almost dead with fatigue.

Indeed, we all suffer in some way from the mad rush and bustle of the few days

before Christmas. What nerve strain and worry we might save ourselves by getting Christmas preparations well forward! To many women the week before Christmas is a nightmare of worry to get presents bought, tied up and dispatched, to get groceries, turkey and Christmas cakes into the house, ready for Christmas Day. The result of all the hurry and fuss at the last moment is an overwhelming consciousness that gifts are badly chosen, inappropriate, unsuitable, that the well-meaning donor has expended money which can be ill spared on goods that will not be appreciated.

We all like giving Christmas presents, and we all like receiving them. There is an art in choosing presents which has no chance of expression when sufficient time is not available for choosing quietly. The woman who makes up her mind to do her Christmas shopping early is not only doing a good turn to some tired shop-girls, she is saving herself that miserable sense of failure which follows the purchasing of gifts at express speed at the last possible moment. Many of us spoil Christmas Day for ourselves by working up till 1 a.m. tying up parcels, arranging gifts. We spoil it for our families, because the best gift a woman can give her home circle is a bright face at the Christmas breakfast table. A tired, exhausted woman, hurried, worried by innumerable trifling needs which cannot possibly be crowded into the time, is in no fit condition to radiate Christmas joy to her household.

The Way to Enjoy Christmas

How much more pleasure might we not derive from Christmas if we made up our minds to finish all the tasks and duties of this time of year, say, by December 18th. That would provide one week's leisure before Christmas, one week free from the sense of hurry and rush. The benefits would be innumerable.

Better than gifts of untold value for husband, children, friends, is that spirit of joy and understanding which is only acquired by the sense of work done quietly, of presents chosen wisely, of time to do the little deeds of kindness to all around which make the real spirit of Christmas-tide in the home.



Jean's Christmas Vigil

The Story of a Haunted Castle

By E. G. GRANGER

IT was a glorious night. The crisp, cold air set the pulses tingling. Moonlight flooded the valley from end to end, lighting up the ruined castle on the hill, causing each turret to stand out with startling clearness, turning the snow-clad trees to frosted silver, and quite putting to shame Maitre Bonhomme's splendid illuminations, which consisted of no fewer than eight candles of coloured wax and ten oil lamps. Not that he minded the moon; he beamed all over his jolly red face as he welcomed each guest in turn.

And what a crowd of guests there was! In fact, all the village had been invited to this Christmas Eve fête, given in honour of his son Jean's twenty-first birthday—Jean, who was his only son, the pride of his father's heart, the strongest, handsomest, and richest fellow in the countryside. For who had so fine a farm as honest Maitre Bonhomme, whose eggs, butter and cheese were not to be beaten in the whole of Alsace—no, nor yet said some, in the whole of France.

So all the village came with gifts and greetings on this festive evening, in order to partake of the good cheer provided, and dance in the big barn to the sound of the little hunchback Hans' fiddle. No, not

quite all, for beautiful Lisa gave neither gift nor greeting. Poor child! how her heart ached with shame as she stood at Jean's side with empty hands and dumb lips. It is a cruel thing to be poor, poorer than all one's neighbours; and if Jean Bonhomme was the richest and most eligible *parti* in the district, Lisa La Blanc was assuredly the poorest and most ineligible maiden. All her hard-earned wages went to support herself and her aged grandmother, and keep their tiny home together; and, though she was noted both for her beauty and her sweet, modest nature, her entire absence of *dot* kept the village lads away; for what father would consent to the union of his son with an utterly dowerless maiden?

"Lisa," whispered Jean hurriedly, as he took her trembling hand, "I want to speak with you, dear. Do you see those fir trees yonder? Meet me by them in half an hour. You *must*, or I shall do something desperate!" And he stepped aside to receive more gifts and greetings.

The girl turned away with joy in her heart, and then sighed, thinking how easy it would be to slip off, when none would care to dance with the penniless girl in her shabby frock and clumsy shoes. For a while

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she stood in the background, watching the gay scene, and then stole off to the trees and waited. It was very cold, and the time seemed long before she heard hurried footsteps, and Jean stood before her.

"Lisa," he cried, taking both her hands into a warm clasp, "I want you also to give me to-night a gift—the greatest gift anyone can give—the gift, dear, of your love. I have given you mine long ago. Ah, sweet! don't turn from me; and oh! don't cry, or you will break my heart. I shall ask my father's consent to our union, and if he will not give it, then let us do without. Only say that you love me. Say it quickly, for I dare not stay long, lest we be missed."

"Yes, Jean, I love you," she answered, struggling with her sobs, "but we can never marry, so you must think of me no more. I shall go away. Yes, I *must* go, for your sake and mine also. Oh, Jean, speak no more of it now, but listen. Hans also says he loves me."

"What!" cried the young man furiously, "that little villainous German hunch-back has dared to raise his eyes to you?"

"Do not excite yourself, my friend; I will never marry him, and all my life I will only love you. No, no, you must not kiss me, Jean. Listen, I say. I fear Hans. I don't know why, but he frightens me."

"Good heavens, child! What a blind fool I must have been! I will thrash Hans within an inch of his life. No, stay—let me think what I can do for you without making folks talk. I feel so

"Lisa," he cried, "I want you to give me the greatest gift anyone can give—the gift of your love."

happy, knowing that you love me, that my brain is whirling. Dance with me the third dance from now, and then I will tell you what plan I have thought of; and remember, I am going to marry you. I have never gone back on my word; it is, as you know, a saying, 'Jean Bonhomme's word is his bond.'"

When Lisa slipped back into the laughing throng of merrymakers she felt relieved to find that apparently no one had noticed her absence. But presently, happening to glance at Hans, she saw his eyes fixed on her with so meaning a look that involuntarily she coloured; and when his eyes flashed from her to Jean, and his mouth wreathed into an evil sneer, she knew that one person, at least, guessed her secret.

The music during the third dance was decidedly erratic, but the lovers were far too absorbed in each other to notice anything; and as they danced, Jean unfolded his scheme to the girl.

"I will give you Bruno," he said. "He loves you almost as much as me; and though he is only a dog, he will understand when I tell him to guard you. The brute is as strong as a lion, and no one will dare to touch you while he is near. At night let him loose, and bid him watch the house. The German he hates almost as much as I do, for once Hans kicked him cruelly when he was chained up; and then, sweetheart, you will soon come into my keeping, and all will be well. Now I must leave you for a while, and see after the other guests."

"Supper! supper!" shouted Maitre Bonhomme, clapping his hands. "Now, lads and lasses, come: take your places and fall to."

No second in



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vitation was needed ; into the spacious kitchen trooped the eager guests, and for some time nothing was heard but the clatter of knives and forks, the rattle of plates, and the merry clinking of glasses. Heavens, how they did eat ! It was a sight to see the way the fat capons vanished, while the yards of crisp bread, the excellent salad, and the pies and tarts seemed to melt like snow in summer.

At length the folks began, one by one, to lean back in their chairs and chat complacently with their neighbours, whereupon the old village priest arose to propose the health of mine host and his handsome son. He spoke well and simply, ending, however, in a sentence which made three hearts beat fast with apprehension. "I shall hope soon to be present at another and even more joyous fête," said the *curé*, beaming through his horn spectacles ; "for I hope soon to see my young friend here in another character. In short, I would see him a bridegroom !" And he sat down amid rapturous applause, which had scarcely died away when Hans suddenly started to his feet.

"A few words of goodwill from the poor little hunchback," he cried. "A long life and a merry one, my friend ! You are indeed favoured among men. Rich, handsome, beloved, you have seemingly all ; yet perhaps even you may lack something. For example, I wonder if you lack—courage?" He paused, and looked at Jean meaningfully.

"I don't think so," retorted the young man, leaning forward and staring fixedly into the hunchback's shifty eyes.

The villagers gazed at the two men wonderingly. What were they talking about, and what meant that strange duel of the eyes ?

"No," said Hans sneeringly, "perhaps not ; and yet no doubt I could name something you would not dare to do."

"Name it !" cried the young man, banging his fist on the table.

"Hush, hush, lad ; don't mind poor Hans," whispered his father.

But the little German heard the whisper, and turned savagely on Maitre Bonhomme himself. "Yet 'poor Hans' can name a thing your son *dare* not do. Though he boasted yesterday before several people that he did not believe in ghosts——"

"Nor do I !" interrupted Jean, contemptuously.

"Yet I'll wager a hundred francs that our brave comrade dare not go alone up to yonder castle, and stay there by himself till the day dawns."

"He will not do so, for I will not allow it !" cried the host, springing to his feet, his jolly red face looking almost pale, and his eyes blazing. "All the world knows that it is haunted by evil spirits. Have not many even here present seen awful sights and heard strange sounds if they neared the castle after dusk ? Do we not all know of two young men who went there one night in some mad frolic, and were never heard of again ? And, worst of all, did not Jean Bassompière return from the place one evening running as if for his life, and did he not fall into a fit, and die shrieking with terror about some terrible white lady ? Ask *Monsieur le Curé*, you evil-tongued, spiteful manikin ! "

"*Pouf !*" ejaculated Hans sneeringly. "Even without your commands he would not go, because he dare not, though he says he is a man who does not believe in ghosts."

"I will have nothing to do with your bet," said Jean calmly, "but I will go. I repeat that I do not believe in evil spirits, and I will go alone to the castle and remain there till day dawns. It is Jean Bonhomme's word."

A tremendous hubbub now ensued. All started expostulating and warning ; but Jean was firm, and his father tried no more to detain him. "My son has passed his word," he said ; "but assuredly, if he does not return, I will kill Hans !" And he left the table abruptly, and was seen no more that night.

The frightened guests now commenced to disperse hurriedly, and Jean went up to Lisa, saying, "Mademoiselle, I must beg you to take care of poor Bruno for me to-night. You are the only one he will obey besides myself, and so I ask you to take him, as he may not come with me. Don't look so pale, dearest," he whispered, "I am quite safe, and to-morrow is Christmas Day. You, who are so good and pure, know that evil spirits (if there be any) cannot hurt us. Pray for me, little one, if you will ; but do not be afraid."

So they went together into the yard. Bruno received his instructions, and the great boarhound went off in charge of the tall, beautiful girl, both obedient to the one

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they loved, though both with heavy hearts and lingering looks behind.

* * * * *

Jean started off gaily enough up the winding path which led to the castle. On either side a thick growth of trees cast gloomy shadows along the narrow road, but overhead the moon shone brightly in a frosty sky, and presently the young man began to whistle. But he very soon stopped. Some weird echo of the hills caught his tune, and threw it back and back again, tossing the sound up and down and to and fro, as if a hundred voices mocked him. In spite of himself, Jean's heart began to beat faster, and the snapping of a twig made him glance nervously about as he hurried forward, feeling at last what a fool he had been to fall into the trap Hans had so evidently set for him. Twice he stopped short, thinking he heard footsteps; but when he stopped the noise stopped also, and he again went resolutely on. All nature seemed as lonely as himself—not a creature in sight, no colour but the white of the snow. He was walking alone among the ghosts of trees and fields and hedges. But Jean had passed his word, and the young fellow knew that if he failed to keep it now, he should always look upon himself as a coward and a vain boaster.

The hill was climbed at last, and he came in full view of the stately ruin. In the soft unearthly light each frosted ivy-leaf, each lichen-covered stone stood out clear with weird distinctness. In front stretched a patch of virgin white; then came the drawbridge, hanging down by sparkling chains across the deep but empty moat; and beyond towered the grand old crumbling walls and thick-set Norman keep.

How long Jean stood gazing at this beautiful and awe-inspiring scene he never knew, but suddenly he became conscious that he was not alone. Glancing hastily about him, he felt his heart almost stop, and the blood seemed to turn to ice in his veins; for gliding through the trees not ten yards distant was the figure of a woman clad in white. A mass of fair hair hung down her back, and a soft bluish light seemed to hover round her as she moved swiftly past him on to the drawbridge, and there paused a moment to wring her hands. Summoning all his courage, Jean rushed

towards her, but she fled swiftly and vanished into the blackness within. After a moment's pause the young man hurriedly followed, only to find himself alone in a wide, gloomy apartment, which had once, no doubt, been a banqueting-hall. It was now only lit by three very narrow windows, through which the moonlight streamed in shafts of brilliant silver. First glancing all round, he retreated to a corner, and, placing his back against the wall, waited with quickened pulse to see what would happen next.

It became nervous work waiting there alone in the dark; the place seemed full of weird rustlings and whispering sounds, which were horribly suggestive of a ghostly company taking counsel together for the punishment of the daring intruder. Then suddenly his heart gave a throb and beat so fiercely that he thought it must burst, for there again was that dreadful white figure, flitting from patch to patch of moonlight, pausing to wring despairing hands, and then gliding back again, only to turn and retrace its steps once more. Jean tried to call out, but his dry throat refused to utter a sound; then, putting a shaking hand into his pocket, he drew out a small revolver which he had taken care to place there, ready loaded, before leaving home. The touch of the weapon steadied his nerves for a moment, and, waiting till the figure became visible in a strip of moonlight, he managed to say in a fairly steady voice: "If you don't stop this nonsense and tell me who you are, I shall fire. My revolver is covering you now."

Without a sound the woman turned and made straight towards him, and at sight of the awful face Jean uttered a cry of horror. It was the face of a demon. The sunken eyes glared with an expression of murderous hate, mingled with a look of agonising fear, and the whole distorted countenance was lit with a ghastly bluish radiance, so that as she came forward through the darkness the outline of the figure was invisible, and the evil face seemed to float towards him suspended in the air.

Again the young fellow felt his blood run cold, and an icy sweat stood on his forehead. Nevertheless, he still covered the thing with his revolver, and as it advanced he fired.

The figure still came on—nearer and nearer yet. A smell of sulphur reached his



"Name it! cried the young man, banging his fist on the table"—p. 105.

nostrils, and he flattened himself against the wall and desperately grasped his weapon in readiness for a blow; but suddenly the white lady paused, turned swiftly, and began to glide up a flight of winding stone steps which evidently led to the floor above.

What possessed Jean he did not know. Awful as the horror of that presence was, the thought of again being left alone, of not knowing where and what the ghastly thing was, seemed absolutely unendurable to him, and he sprang up the steps in pursuit. The staircase was very ruinous, and great gaps appeared here and there making the ascent a dangerous matter even in daylight, and one of serious peril in the dark. Still the young man scrambled on, and still the awful shape moved before him. Now they had reached a stone corridor, and down it sped the white lady, with her pursuer close behind. But suddenly Jean uttered a hoarse cry, for the floor seemed to sink away under his feet, and he was hauled

into some pitch-dark, evil-smelling hole, arriving at the bottom with a sickening thud which knocked all breath and sense out of him for a long time.

When at length he returned to consciousness, he found himself in darkness. He searched for his matches, lit one, and looked round as well as he could. He seemed to be in some terrible dungeon, the walls of which were of solid stone; and though he knew he must have fallen from above, he could discern no opening in the rocky ceiling. The floor was covered with a thick, foul, half-frozen mud, which however, had probably saved him from broken bones, or even worse. Then, just as the tiny flame was nearly spent, he caught sight of something which made him start so violently that he dropped the dying match, and was instantly plunged in thick darkness again. Hastily lighting another with trembling hands, he gazed in horror on a white object lying in a distant corner. Was it?—yes,

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"If you don't stop this nonsense and tell me who you are, I shall fire!"—p. 166.

oh! merciful heavens! it was—a mouldering skeleton. And now a wave of terror and despair swept over him, and he leaned half-fainting against the nearest wall. Who could find him here, supposing even that anyone came to search for him, which was doubtful? And here he was—God help him!—alone, surrounded by unknown horrors, a prisoner in this foul den, without food, without water, and utterly without hope.

* * * * *

Lisa knelt at the window, gazing across the moonlit valley at the ruined castle on the hill. For her sleep was impossible, and so she kept vigil beside her open casement, heedless of the bitter cold, absorbed in prayer and thought. Suddenly, through the stillness of the night rang the sharp

report of a pistol-shot. She sprang to her feet and listened breathlessly, but still the silence remained unbroken. Then an awful thought flashed through her mind. What if Jean were dead or dying up there alone in that fearful place? Oh! why had she let him go alone? In another moment the girl was in the garden, and the boarhound came bounding towards her.

"Bruno," she said, laying a trembling hand on his huge head, "we must go and find your master. No, sir, no barking; we must be very quiet and quick. Come, good dog—good old fellow, come."

The intelligent creature seemed to understand her words, and they set off down the white and silent street and across a meadow to the little path which Jean had ascended scarcely two hours before.

A thousand disquieting thoughts whirled through Lisa's brain as she hurried along. Would her lover be angry with her for coming? And what would people say if they found out that Lisa La Blanc had followed Jean Bonhomme up to that desolate spot alone, and in the dead of night? And yet he must be in danger, or why had he fired that shot? And if he had not fired it, then surely someone had fired at him. Oh, she must see him—she must know what had happened, or she should go mad!

Meanwhile Bruno walked quietly beside her, only cocking his ears as a frightened rabbit scuttled across their path. He knew he must take care of this frail girl given into his charge by his beloved master, and she felt thankful for his strong protecting presence; so that, in spite of her nervousness, her spirits rose as she neared the castle. Now she had gained the summit, and Lisa's heart beat with hope and a kind of shy joy which almost conquered her increasing nervousness. The moon was clouded, and the night was not nearly so bright as it had been; still she could see plainly that no one was in front of the stately ruin. Jean must have

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gone inside. "Oh, how could he?" she thought; then in a frightened voice she called, "Jean!" and again, "Jean!" But there was no answer; the place was as silent as the tomb.

Suddenly Bruno gave a low, ominous growl, and with a start Lisa turned, and saw hurrying towards the drawbridge the figure of a woman clad in white, with long fair hair streaming over her shoulders. The dog bounded forward, and the girl, though half-swooning with terror, followed him, unable to endure the thought of being left quite alone. The figure had paused on the drawbridge, and a short distance from it crouched the boarhound, his hair standing erect on his back, while he uttered deep growls, and occasionally short sharp barks.

"Good dog!" cried Lisa, urging him on in trembling tones. "At it, then, good dog!"

Her voice seemed to give the great brute courage. He rose in an uncertain way, and was about to spring forward again, when the figure fled, disappearing into the dark gateway. For a moment they paused, and then the dog leaped forward, and after him rushed Lisa. They gained the banqueting-hall just in time to see the white lady gliding swiftly up the staircase, and after her bounded the dog—near, yet never quite near to her; while the girl, shaking with cold and a deadly fear, scrambled after them, leaping madly over the dreadful gaps made by fallen steps, the darkness mercifully hiding from her the awful depths below.

Now they had reached the battlements. The hound gave a fierce bark, and sprang with open jaws and gleaming teeth straight at the white lady. As Lisa reached the roof a hoarse cry of agony rang through the air, and she saw the dog staring over the edge of the battlements, but the figure was nowhere to be seen. Bruno uttered a dismal howl, and then crept back to his mistress, thrusting a damp black nose into her hand for comfort. She, poor girl, had sunk down exhausted, and now relieved her overstrained nerves by a burst of healing tears.

Then the rim of the blessed moon once more peeped through the clouds, throwing a ray of clear white light over the scene, banishing the terror of darkness.

But where was Jean? This agonising thought made Lisa dry her eyes and prepare to descend the ruined staircase. It was a terrible business now, for as the light grew stronger the girl could see the yawning precipices beneath her, and, weakened as she was by cold, excitement, and fatigue, she hardly dared to spring over the wide gaps. Once she slipped, and hung for a moment in deadly terror, with her feet dangling over the edge of a chasm; but she drew herself up again at last, and as she rested trembling upon a lower step she noticed a stone passage turning to the right, about which Bruno was sniffing and whining in a curious way. With her heart full of a vague hope, Lisa began to walk along it; then suddenly she gave a little cry of gladness, for there, lying in the very middle of the



"After her bounded the dog, while the girl, shaking with cold and a deadly fear, scrambled after them."

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passage, was a lovely Christmas rose which she knew Jean had worn in his coat at the birthday fête. She stooped to pick it up, but found to her astonishment that half the petals were firmly fixed between the cracks of two large stone flags. Kneeling down beside the flower, she endeavoured to draw it out, and in doing so she placed one hand in the centre of the further flag. Instantly it sank away under her hand, nearly precipitating her forward into a large dark hole; and then immediately the huge, thick slab swung back into its place again, though not before a human cry had reached the girl's ears. Tremblingly and cautiously she pushed the slab again, and, holding it open, heard, to her joy and amazement, Jean's voice calling, "Who's there?"

"It is I—Lisa! Where, oh, where are you?"

"I am in a fearful dungeon, dear. Who is with you? For heaven's sake call them to help me out of this!"

"There is no one but me, dear. Oh! forgive me. I felt you were in danger, and I—I had to come. Bruno came too; can you not hear him barking?"

"God bless you, my brave sweetheart. You have saved my life. I was dying in this foul atmosphere. Can you prop that slab open, and then go for help?"

A few more words of love and hope were exchanged, the stone fixed open, and then the girl went speeding down the hill in breathless haste towards the village, leaving Bruno to whine and fidget on the edge of the dark hole whence came his beloved master's voice.

And how long it seemed before men came with ropes to draw him up from that horrible den! The light of dawn—the dawn of Christmas—was already lighting up the horizon before they rescued him. He came up, bruised, pale, and haggard, his new clothes torn and covered with evil-smelling mud, looking such a fearful contrast to the spruce *débonnaire* young dandy they had left only a few hours before, that the villagers turned pale also, and would assuredly have fled from the ill-omened castle, to return no more, had it not been for their new *gendarme*, a man who had lately been sent from headquarters to their quiet little village.

"This is the work of men's hands, not ghosts," he said, bending to examine the ingeniously-constructed *oubliette*. "It should by rights have been fastened by this bolt. Now, come down, and let's examine the whole place. I mean to get to the bottom of this, for I have my suspicions."

At that moment one of the villagers came running to them. "Mon Dieu!" he cried breathlessly, "I can see something outside; it looks for all the world like some long fair hair hanging to the ivy."

The *gendarme* hurried down. "It's a wig," he said decidedly. Then he went and looked into the moat. "And there's the owner, I believe," he added grimly.

They climbed down to where lay a small, huddled-up white figure, and turned the ghastly painted face to the light. It was the little hunchback Hans!

* * * * *

Most ghost stories have an explanation, and this one is no exception. The old castle proved to be inhabited by a gang of smugglers long wanted by the police, and Hans was found to have been a prominent member of the gang, who was usually left in charge when the rest were absent. He had lured Jean to the castle, intending to put a dangerous and hated rival out of the way; but when Lisa and Bruno appeared Hans was both amazed and terrified, for he greatly feared the dog. At first his disguise, his horribly painted face, and, above all, the phosphorus with which he had smeared himself, kept the animal from him. However, when he found it racing after him he lost his head and fled. Turning at bay on the edge of the battlements, he must have lost his footing, fallen over, and broken his neck.

It appeared also that a large reward had been offered to anyone who would give the authorities a clue which would enable them to capture the smugglers, and, as they were all taken at the castle, this reward was in due course handed over to Lisa, who thus became the best-dowered maiden in those parts.

Shortly afterwards Jean and Lisa were married amid general rejoicings; and as the bride came from the church the village children presented her with a large bouquet of Christmas roses.

"A Christmas Letter for You!"

Sending Greetings to 37,000 Prisoners

By T. W. WILKINSON

WHO shall number the beneficent agencies born of the spirit of Christmas? They are countless. Again and again the tender heart of somebody in the Master's service has overflowed with sympathy at the greatest of all Christian festivals, and, lo! a work has begun that has spread far and wide and been of material and spiritual advantage to thousands in trouble and despair.

One of the most remarkable of these efforts to uplift fallen humanity was started just thirty years ago. At that time long sentences were given to convicted evil-doers, and as a result women who had been in touch with the Prison Mission founded by the late Mrs. Susanna Meredith were, on being re-convicted, cut off from it for a considerable period. To keep up communication with them, the earnest lady who followed Mrs. Fry hit upon the happy idea of writing to them, and sent a small batch of letters to Millbank Prison for the Christmas of 1880. The success of this innovation was such that next year the number was increased, and so the work grew, till now nearly 40,000 letters

are sent by
Mrs. Meredith's
Prison Mission
to gaols, not
only in the
British Isles, but
in all parts of
the world.

Nearly 40,000

Christmas greetings! Picture the mass! Picture, too, the care, labour, and organisation that must necessarily go to the production of it. Here, in truth, is a task of no common magnitude, and one connected with which are many interesting details.

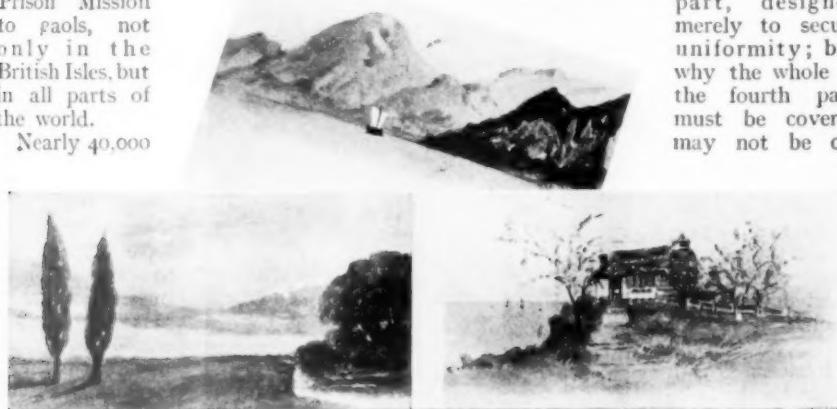
First, about sixty original letters—which must not contain news or anything controversial—are obtained for the English section. These are then distributed to copyists—who, like the authors, are mostly ladies—with a copy of certain rules which must be strictly observed, as:

"The letters must be written by hand clearly and legibly without flourishes or abbreviations, and all texts written out fully in red ink, and the reference given.

"The letters must be paragraphed as the copies supplied are, and they must extend to the foot of the fourth page. The writing must begin one-third from the top of the first page.

"Decorations must fill the upper part of the first page, and should consist of water-colour paintings, pressed seaweed or dried flowers, ferns, or grasses, or suitable scraps. Figures, animals, or fruit are not admissible."

Clearly, these rules are, for the most part, designed merely to secure uniformity; but why the whole of the fourth page must be covered may not be ob-



SOME SPECIMENS OF HAND-PAINTED LETTER HEADINGS SENT TO PRISONERS.

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vious to everybody. It is that the recipients may not use any of the paper—a valuable commodity in prisons—for secret correspondence. This precaution is imposed by the authorities, who, while doing all they can in furtherance of the work, enforce such restrictions as experience has proved to be absolutely necessary.

There are similar rules, it may be noted, for the authors of letters. One runs :

"They should begin 'Dear Friend,' or, if for women, 'Dear Sister,' and be signed with the initials only of the composer of the letter."

The copyists, who number about 700, and live in all parts of the country, begin work in the early part of the year, and continue till October, when they send their output—from six to 200 or more letters per head, some Time and Talent branches producing as many as 500—to the Mission House at Clapham. All the copyists devote great pains, and oft-times no little skill, to the decoration, which is invariably pretty and appropriate, and has been a feature of the letters from the beginning. Many ladies head their letters with water-colour sketches which make them particularly attractive.

In the English section are included about one hundred letters in Welsh. Able though most natives of the Principality are to read English, it was felt that a letter to Welsh prisoners in their mother tongue would appeal to them with greater force than one in an alien language, and copies of a letter prepared by a Welsh lady were consequently circulated in various gaols.

As with the English letters, so with those for the Colonies and foreign countries : pre-

cisely the same system is followed, except that the work is finished much earlier in the year. Difficulties, however, frequently crop up in connection with the foreign letters. When suitable originals have been obtained, it is not always easy to find people who are able and willing to make copies of them. Missionaries and other travellers furnish a good many foreign letters, and in the duplication of such greetings full advantage is taken of the circumstance that a total ignorance of some languages is no barrier to copying letters written in them. If a person can play the sedulous ape well, he is virtually qualified for the task.

The foreign letters are in no fewer than twelve languages : French, German, Italian, Polish, Finnish, Russian, Dutch, Norwegian, Spanish, Swedish, Danish, and Greek. There is a curious fact connected with the letters in the last-named language. Formerly greetings in Greek were sent into Cyprus ; but now all that are written go to a certain American prison which has a remarkably cosmopolitan population.

Next, the letters are folded and put into special envelopes, each of which is inscribed : "A Christmas Letter for You." This work, which, like all the rest entailed by the huge undertaking, is entirely voluntary, is done by the "Busy Bees"—a number of ladies who meet in the institution at Clapham at the beginning of October for the foreign and Colonial letters and in the middle of November for the others.

And, finally, the letters are made up into batches and despatched to gaol governors, chaplains, and other officials who have undertaken to act as distributors on Christmas morning, and whose kindly interest in the work is most gratifying. Last year the actual number sent



MAKING THE LETTERS UP INTO BATCHES FOR DESPATCH TO PRISONERS.

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THE 'BUSY BEES' FOLDING AND ENCLCSING THE LETTERS TO PRISONERS.

out was 37,643, and the destinations were forty-four prisons in the British Isles and various institutions of the same kind in Cape Colony, Orange River Colony, the Transvaal, Natal, Australia, Newfoundland, Malta, Tasmania, New Zealand, East and West Indies, Straits Settlements, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Russia, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark.

In addition, letters were sent to inmates of ineptiates' homes in our own country. They are very welcome at such institutions; but those which may, perhaps, seem best suited for them on theoretical grounds are barred by official regulations. In any communication to an inmate of such a home, it is not permissible to mention, or even to allude to, drink.

So, when Christmas morning arrives, a greeting as attractive in form as it is uplifting in matter reaches the inmate of the cheerless, lonely cell, lighting the gloom inevitably, and, it may be, also reviving those higher feelings and aspirations which become more or less atrophied by crime and its environment, with what results who shall say?

Seldom can a letter altogether fail in its mission, though when it does it fails grotesquely. Thus, for instance, the messages received three years ago by a number of incarcerated Suffragists were on the evils of drink! Their misapplica-

bility was, of course, ludicrous; but in preparing the letters the Prison Mission must necessarily consider the mass while addressing the individual, and its experience is that a few words on the awful consequences of immoderate indulgence in intoxicating liquors are suitable for ninety-nine female prisoners out of every hundred. So large is the proportion of women whose downfall is due, directly or indirectly, to drink!

That in many cases the letters sow seed which sooner or later produces good fruit, there is ample evidence to prove. Last Christmas some of the male inmates of a certain prison were so delighted with their letters that they asked to be allowed to take them home to their people. In another gaol there was a series of striking incidents arising from the letters.

"One apparently hardened offender," wrote the chaplain, "told me this morning that he has read his every day, and that it has touched him deeply. Another man, who has always denied his guilt, now tells me he has been converted by his Christmas letter, and made a full confession of his crime and attendant circumstances."

This is a truly remarkable tribute. Prison officials are prone to remark cynically that of the thousands of men and women who have passed through their hands, all have been innocent. It is, in

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fact, very rarely indeed that a prisoner acknowledges that he has been justly convicted.

Proceeding, the chaplain gave a further instance of the good wrought by the letters.

"I found," he said, "the enclosed written on a prisoner's slate: 'I acknowledge receipt of Christmas letter from E. S., of Mrs. Meredith's Mission, with thanks. I appreciate and reciprocate the good wishes therein expressed, and trust that, although you may not be able to see the harvest, you will not weary in the sowing.'"

To the mission direct innumerable other testimonies have been made by prisoners, one of them, presumably a Scotsman who had shirked his paternal obligations, winding up his message with the emphatic avowal: "I'll neglect the bairns nae mair." And some ex-convicts have returned thanks in person for letters which they had received. A few years back a man travelled from New York for such a purpose, and stated how pleased he was to get one of the letters while he was in a certain American prison.

In another way also the letters are demonstrably a valuable means of bring-

ing back strayed sheep to the path of righteousness. Through receiving them, women call at the mission house, have there instilled into them the habit of work, and ultimately become self-supporting, and lead steadfast and upright lives.

Admirable is the system by which such a reformation is effected. When a woman comes to the shelter on discharge from prison, she is, if suitable, admitted, and given, not alms, but work. She is put in the laundry, or at housework or taught a handicraft, such as making felt slippers, woollen rugs, baskets, etc. She does not live in the institution, but, with her companions, in private houses, which are, however, under the closest supervision, day and night.

At all times, further, she is under Christian influence. If she behaves well for about three months, she gets some



My dear Friend

In some families at Christmas time, it is the custom to make a circle round the fire, and tell stories for the amusement of the company.

I am going to tell you a true one, and one that I hope may be a help to you.

In a large mining district in the North of England a godly magistrate was holding gospel meetings - he noticed one man in particular coming night after night.

A SPECIMEN LETTER, SENT TO A MALE PRISONER.

clothing, and then usually goes into service; and it is not uncommon for her to write subsequently stating that the change brought about by the Mission still lasts. There is, therefore, an essentially practical side to the institution.

If regarded from this point of view alone, it has great claims to the consideration of the charitable. It calls for help, and still more for funds. -

A Bearer of Burdens

A Story of the Dales

By OSWALD WILDRIDGE

FOR one of the richest jokes upon its records the dale is indebted on the one part to a judge whose name stands high on the roll of legal fame, and on the other to old Sally Watterson, its postmistress, letter-carrier and general purveyor of oddly assorted scraps of news. It arose out of the worrying of Lowthian's sheep on the Birker heaf, and when the Assize trial had run the length of three days, his lordship's patience exploded in an indictment of the folks who dwell between the Hause and the sands of Dalefoot as "surely the most stiff-necked and tongue-tied race in the world." It is admitted that Sally was the heroine in chief of that famous adventure, and when she came home she herself gave us the story.

"Oh, I've mannished all right, thank ye," she said, "and I've had a varra comfortable time. What did I say? Oh, I didn't say much and I'm thinking I toald a bit less. It was none o' my business whether Lowthian's sheep were worried by Brownrigg's dogs or a pack o' foxes, and I'm not bound to shout fra t' hoosetops ivverything that I see. My sarties, if that was part o' my daily labour there'd be some trouble. I didn't go to Carel because I wantit to go, I went because a bit of blue paper said I must; but I med up my mind that I wasn't going to poke my nose intil other folk's business. If they want to ken about Lowthian's sheep, let 'em find oot."

"Ay, that's not a bad rule, Sally," Sampson Lowther assured her, "but what was it you told the court?"

"Oh, varra little. Moment I set eyes on them men with the wigs and gooms, I felt sure that a bit o' soft soap might come in useful, and so when I stepped intil the box I addressed the judge as 'Your Majesty,' and—I think he liked it. And that's all I've to tell. They got to know my name, and what I do for my bread an' butter, an' nowt mair."

Afterwards we learned the rest of the tale and the excellence of its flavour never

weakened. Often, in our cracks in the long winter evenings, when the conversation flagged the master of Nepghyll would remove his pipe from his lips to tell us that he "was thinking of Sally when she was before the judge at Carel," and then it would be a matter of:

"Ay, she called him 'Your Majesty.'"

"And she thought he liked it."

"And he said we were stiff-necked."

"And a tongue-tied race."

And often a big, brown hand would come down on a solid mass of knee, eyes would twinkle, and we would all of us agree that "it just capped ivverything."

Still, there was an element of truth in his lordship's indictment. The men and women of the dale have a fine capacity for minding their own business, and there is reason to fear that grievous harm has sometimes been done for the want of a word. This is one of the points on which they are hard as iron—they will not explain. Rather would they travel under a cloud of misunderstanding all the days of life than expose their wounds to the gaze of curious eyes or deliver their graver concerns to the sifting of gossipy tongues. And it was this which turned Richard Cottier into a recluse, and made him a man of scorn.

It was in the murk of a stinging night in December that Wilfrid Iredale left the last train from the south when it halted at Dalefoot and anxiously inquired of Isaac Tiffin the way to Richard Cottier's home.

Isaac carefully took stock of the lad, with his white face and lean frame, and solemnly shook his head. "Eh, bairn," he said, "thoo'll niver git till Burnfoot to-night. There'll nut be anmudder train till sebben o'clock in morning. Thoo'd better gang till t' Castle Arms and spend an easy time in front of a good fire."

Wilfrid ignored the advice and demanded information. "How far is it to Burnfoot?"

"Sebben mile if it's a yard, and there's a foot of snow all the way."

"I don't care if there is ten feet, I must get through it," Wilfrid doggedly responded,

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and when Isaac took notice of the tone and realised the determination it represented he threw himself into the other's service.

"Well, I've put you on t' track," he said. "Thoo'd better gang up t' lall railway; they mannish to cut a road throo t' snow this morning. Cum this way." And with this he led him across the sidings to the big, black shed where the little toy trains made their start for Dalehead. "Just follow t' metals," he directed. "There's no moon, but t' snow'll give plenty of light. Away over the bridge the line runs through a deep cutting in t' rock and at far end o' that there's a bit hut. That's t' Castle Station an' thoo mun go by it. A mile further on thoo'll find a boat on its side an' that's Fellfoot Station. Next there's a station with a gey lock of hooses round it—that's t' Green—an' two mile further on thoo'll cum to Burnfoot."

And then, as Wilfrid began to thank him, he inquired: "Who is it you want to find?"

"I want Richard Cottier, the schoolmaster. Can you tell me—"

"That'll be an easy matter. When you git to Burnfoot you'll see a hoose with a light burning. That'll be schoolmaister's. He sits up with his books till a maist scandalous hour—often till eleven o'clock. Ivverybody else'll be in bed."

Accordingly it happened that when the night had grown a couple of hours older Richard Cottier was called from his book by a gentle tapping at his door, and a moment later Wilfrid was looking up into a pair of sharp, grey eyes and a face whose gravity made him shrink still further from the task he had set himself. Inside the hall there was an awkward pause. The younger man was wrestling with fear and shame and the schoolmaster was doing battle with a host of troublesome thoughts. And then when Wilfrid mentioned his name the other became a man of some distress, but when he held out his hand Wilfrid realised that he was one of those with a comforting grip.

"Wilfrid Iredale," the schoolmaster repeated. "Then you are Mary Dickinson's son—and you are welcome."

"It is—because of my mother that I am here. She told me—" Wilfrid halted and tried again. "She told me that—if ever I was in trouble—quite at bay—and in sore need of a friend, I had to come to you.

She said I had to tell you—this was her message to you—that there was no one in the world more to be trusted than yourself. I have—"

"Thank you for the message," Cottier interrupted. "Your mother and I were friends. But it is a poor sort of friendship that I am showing to her son. You have had a hard journey and are tired and hungry, and here I am keeping you on the door-mat instead of offering you the seat of the guest by the fireside. You must have bite and sup, and then you may tell me your story, or better still, let it rest until the morning."

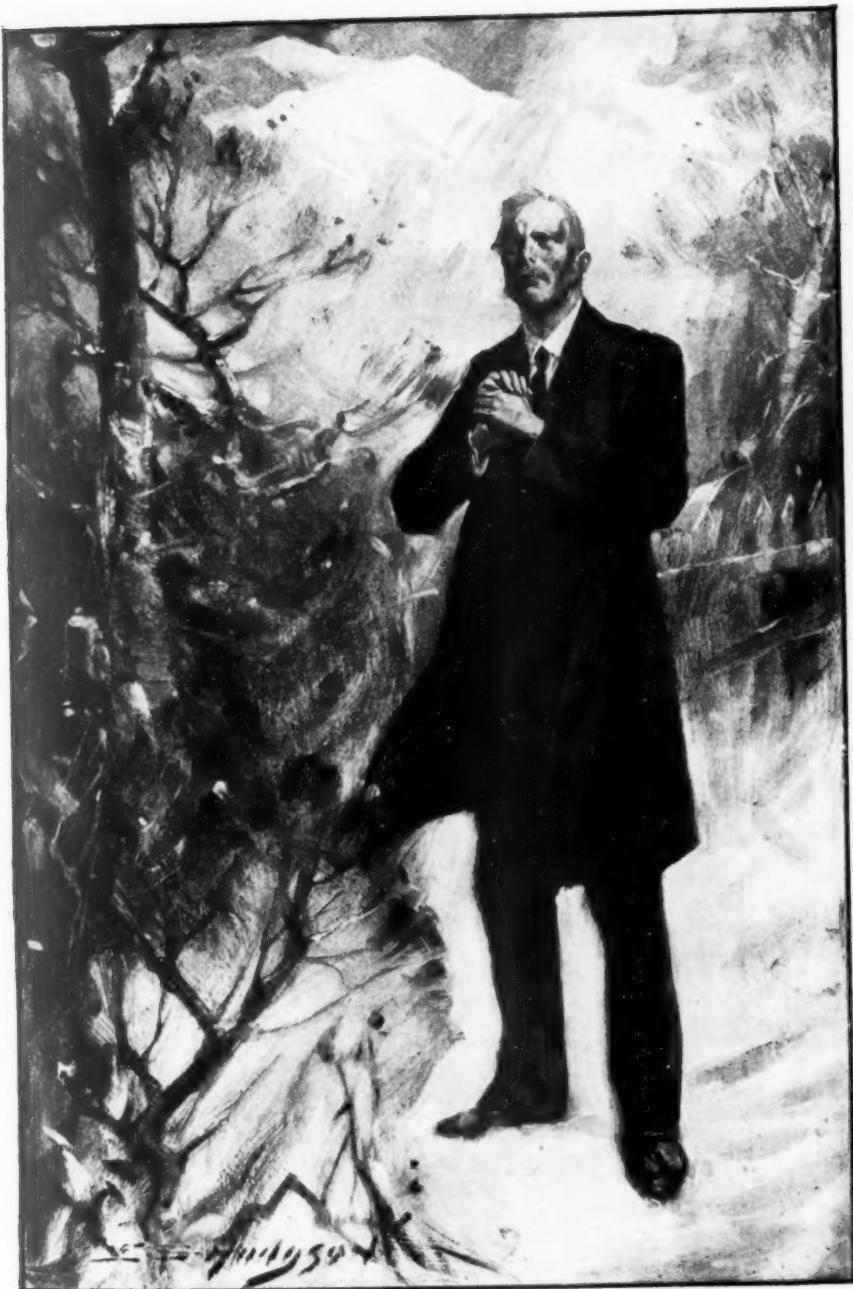
"It cannot rest." There was sullen determination in Wilfrid Iredale's voice. "I must be away by the first train in the morning."

"Ah well." It was surprising how kindly this stern-faced man could be. "At least let it have an hour's respite. Come along to my little snug, and I will forage and see what Bella Muncaster has left for the table."

Together the two men passed into the tiny parlour, which, to the schoolmaster, was the peacefulst place on earth, and soon after the hour of midnight struck the stranger from the south was lying in Richard Cottier's bed, sleeping calmly as a little child. But Richard Cottier sat alone, and with him a sense of dread, a fear that the days of contentment were ended. Harshly the old case clock ticked off the seconds, the glow died out of the fire and the warmth from the room, and it was not until the blackness of the outer world had softly melted into grey and the ivory peaks were flushed with fire that the schoolmaster rose and drew aside the blind. Afterwards he passed out into his own little garden and turned his face to meet the coming of the sun. And his lips framed themselves to a woman's name, and then to a passionate prayer for strength.

"Mary Dickinson gave herself to another man," he murmured, "but she sent her laddie here . . . and I'll see him through . . . Lord, give me a strong heart . . . Help me to be a bearer of burdens. Somehow I seem to have been living an empty life, and now the chance of redeeming the days has been given to me. This is no evil that has come to me in the night, but a good thing."

From this hour Richard Cottier walked the rounds of a new life. As a strict matter



"Lord, give me a strong heart . . . Help me to be a bearer of burdens."

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of fact he was not a man of the hill-country himself ; he was one of the lowlanders from the marshes by Skimburnness, but all the days of his activity he had spent under the shadow of Great Howe, and in the manner of his life he was a real son of the dale. Like Fletcher of Hunday, one of his closest friends, and David Branthwaite, the doctor, he was a lonely man, inasmuch as no woman body made his house a homely place ; but after the manner of the schoolmasters, he was a bit freer with his tongue, and this we counted a happy fact, for his head carried a rare store of knowledge, and his talk never ran on trifles.

In one other point did he differ from the rest of the dalesmen ; they were mostly stay-at-homes, but he was one of the wanderers, and, having no one to think of but himself, he was well able to trip away to strange parts as soon as the schoolhouse doors were closed for the holidays. And here again we gained much good for ourselves ; as Hobby Jackson said, "we manished to do a lot o' sightseeing by deputy," and the year of the schoolmaster's great adventure when he spent a fortnight in Paris, ranked as one of our epochs. Before the winter was over we rejoiced in a fairly intimate knowledge of the customs of France, and Hobby, for a spell, made a point of addressing all his companions as "Mounseer."

Indeed, it was out of this side of Richard Cottier's life that the first great shock was administered. One night in the late autumn he made it known that when the summer came again a tramp through Spain would realise for him one of his ambitions, and it was easy to see that already he was having a rare feast of anticipation. Afterwards it was remembered that he suddenly dropped the subject, but no one realised it until the day of the sheep-clipping at Nepghyll when Thomas Salkeld passed the news.

"I've just had a word with schuilmaister as I came ower fell," said Thomas, "and I'm wondering what's gone wrong with him."

"Ay !"

"Oh, I happened to say something about the time he'd be having among t' Spanishers, and—what d'ye think ? He's not going. He means to spend his holiday in t' dale."

Before the world had grown much older it was realised that this was not an isolated circumstance of little importance, but the

beginning of a revolution. About the end of the summer it was whispered that the schoolmaster was rigidly practising certain economies in his household ; by and by we noticed that his parsimony was being extended to his dress, and in the end we grew accustomed to seeing him in threadbare coat and frayed trousers, while his soft-brimmed hat took on a weariful droop.

His habits also underwent a complete change. He was no longer companionable, but kept a closed door, neither giving hospitality nor accepting any. He also took to lonely rambling on the fells, and his voice was never raised now in any of our friendly cracks.

As to the reason for it all, those who probed found nothing but darkness and murk, but at last a scornful word spoken in the train at the close of Cockermouth market made it clear that the master's secret had been discovered. It was Jack Douglas, one of the nippiest tongues in the dale, who let it out.

"Noo, I like the schoolmaister," he said. "He's a saving body, and it's a grand thing is economy. But I'm thinking that the economy of Richard Cottier should have the name of miserliness given to it. And a miser is a man that I canna bide."

Before the week was out it was known that the man who had cared so very little for money, who, indeed, had affected a certain measure of contempt for it, had fallen into the clutch of the demon of avarice ; within a year of Jack's discovery there was open talk about the schoolmaster's hidden stocking and its store of idolised gold, and one night when some of his own boys were caught looking in by the bottom of the window blind they confessed without shame that they were "oanly keeking to see Maister Cottier counting his money." It was wonderful how quickly such a tiny seed produced such a sturdy crop.

II

IT was in the spring of the year that Thomas Salkeld proposed that memorable meeting which was intended to give form to the slumbering rebellion against the schoolmaster's reign, but it was not until the Lakeland peaks were crowned with snow that a real move was made. Above

A BEARER OF BURDENS

all the prob'ems we had ever dealt with this one called for discreet treatment, and it was curious how on all occasions the critics supplied the answer to their own criticisms.

There was Sampson Lowther, for example, who contended that "it was one of the first laws of conduct that a man should practise what he preached ; what was the use of the schoolmaster lecturing the boys on the virtue of good-fellowship when he himself was little better than a hermit, and how could they be expected to grow up with the love of God in their hearts when their mentor had nothing but the love of money in his own ?" And while everybody agreed with this judgment they also agreed with that other conclusion which Sampson briefly stated, that "the schoolmaster at one time was one of the most likeable men in the dale," that "mercy was a mair important quality than judgment," and in short that "it would be as well to bide a bit longer."

After the lapse of days, however, the word was passed along the fells that a council of war, informal enough, but heavily charged with intent, was to be held, and that John Gale of Underbank had reluctantly consented to the use of his kitchen as the place of meeting.

Anything more deficient in formality than the manner of the meeting could scarcely be conceived, and the sticklers for rule and order would have been greatly shocked. Moreover, all of the dalesmen who foregathered by the Underbank hearth, there was just a dozen of them, seemed singularly bent on their pipes and the gossip of the fellside ; even when Harry Langcake suggested that it was time to be "handling this business o' t' schoolmaister's," Sampson Lowther responded by calling attention to the fact that the wind was getting up, and it was not until Thomas Salkeld made his famous speech that the meeting settled down to the problem. "I'd have ye mind," said Thomas, "that it's not a man we're attacking ; it's oor lads we're trying to save. They want an example it's possible for them to follow at all times. And I'd also have ye mind," he was careful to explain, "that I wadn't turn Maister Cottier off for anything ye could offer me, and all I'se going to move is this : That we poke the Board up a bit and get them to give the schoolmaister a hint that he ought to send in his resignation.

He's bound to have saved up a bonny penny by this, and he'll be able to keep himself."

"And I move that we do nothing of the sort." John Gale sprang to his feet and drove a hard fist into an equally hard palm. "I'm minding all the bonny days the schoolmaister has given till us, and all the service he's given to the bairns. I'm minding also that once upon a time we used to say of him wi' pride that all his work was done for love, and none of it for the money it brought him ; and if he has wandered fra the path we none of us ken the temptation he's had to face, and none of us can guess the weight of the punishment he's having to bear. The way that a man chooses for himself is often the roughest way of all. What then, who can tell ? Mebbe all the schoolmaister needs is a show of the helping hand to fetch him back to his own narrow road. He's just like some of oor sheep ; he's got off his own heaf ; in a while he'll be mighty glad to come back, and the close cropping of the pastures 'll be the sweetest bite he's ever had.

"There's another thing. What right have we to judge him ? It's only five years since he began to go wrong and Richard Cottier's not one you can reckon up so soon as that—you'll not ken all his points at the end of a lifetime. Noo, I've got a notion. It's proposed that he gets a hint to resign. I propose that instead of a hint we give him a holiday. That trip to Spain he was so set on five years ago'd do him a power of good. S'pose we have a bit of a collection, just as we sit. I'll stand five pun to it as my share, and I'll count it a cheap bargain if it helps to make the schoolmaister the man he used to be. And we'll send to Bransty and buy a ticket, and what's left over we'll put in a purse, and we'll get one o' t' lassies to do a bit needlework on it and we'll present it till t' schoolmaister with t' luv and best wishes o' t' dale. And then, when he sees hoo much we care for him mappen he'll find oot that the life he's parted fra is mair to be desired than the laying up of treasure for moth and rust to corrupt."

Here it dawned upon John Gale that for the first time in his life he was making a speech, and he dropped back into his chair in confusion. It is doubtful indeed whether he heard the benediction pronounced by George Teasdale : "Dar bon, man, but thou's a genius," but he did not miss the

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look which his wife flashed across the hearth, and with this he was quite content. Now that the strain was eased every tongue was unloosed and all the talk ran upon the problem of ways and means. So absorbed did they all become that none of them paid any heed to the yelping of the pack of sheep dogs, awaiting their masters in the byres, but suddenly the talk was punctuated by a determined attack on the knocker of the "best" door. Mistress Gale vanished down the passage and presently returned with a stranger who, she explained, "wanted a bit rest and then to be put on his way."

The stranger himself, a young man whose manner was that of the town and his speech that of the south country, completed the explanation: "Awfully sorry to trouble you," he said, "but I've had a most desperate time on the hills. Gave myself up for lost. Don't know when I rejoiced so much in a light as in this one in your window."

He was sheeted in snow, and nearing the edge of exhaustion, but half a dozen pairs of hands were ready to do him service and, even before he had been freed from his wraps, Mistress Gale was away to the pantry in search of her most substantial fare. And though all of them talked freely of his adventures on the way over the Pass, it was not until he had satisfied his hunger and been given the cosiest corner by the hearth that he was asked any questions as to whence he came or whether he was bound.

"I have come from London," he told them. "My name's Iredale—Wilfrid Iredale, and since I entered the Lake Country I have been travelling on foot. Last night I slept at Little Langdale; to-day I had just got half-way through Wrynose Pass when the snow overtook me; and now I want to get to Burnfoot."

"And that's a thing thou'll not do to-neet," George Teasdale assured him. "Snow's varra thick."

"So it was the last time I came to this dale of yours," Wilfrid laughed, "and on that occasion also I was told that I would not get through."

"And did you?"

"I did. You see I had to." The laughter died out of his eyes. "It was important—frightfully important."

"What part of Burnfoot do you want to git till?"

"I want to go to the schoolhouse. The schoolmaster is a particular friend of mine. In fact he is the greatest friend I have."

"Better bide where you are, bairn," Mistress Gale was suddenly trapped into saying. "You'll find a warmer fire here than at the hoose of Richard Cottier. I doot you'll find his hearth a varra cold one. He's not likely to be spending much money on firing at present."

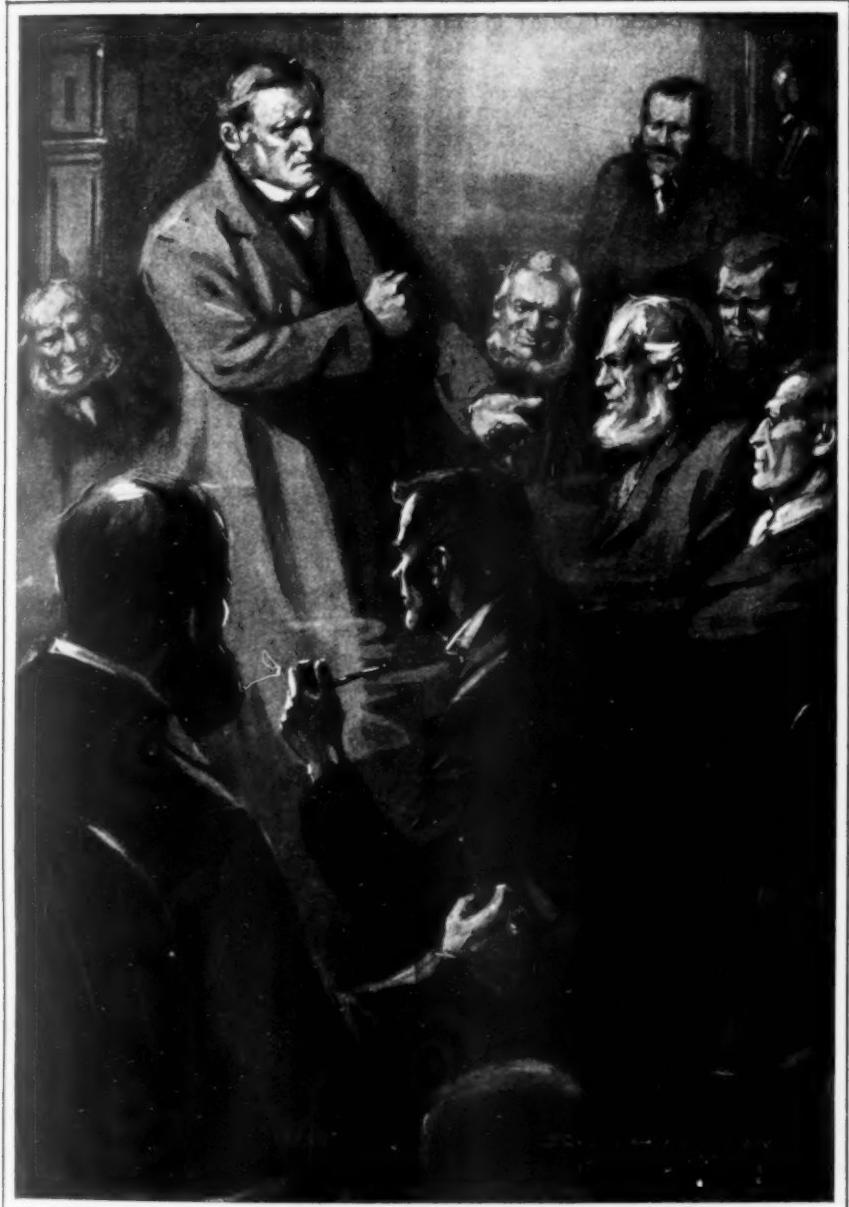
Instantly she would fain have withdrawn the thing she had said, but it was too late. At once Wilfrid Iredale perceived that all was not well with his friend, and such a relentless inquisitor did he prove that John Gale was driven at last to admit that the "schoolmaister had turned himself into one of those penny-wise, saving bodies, and was keeping himself to himself, so that dales-folk didn't ken quite seah much aboot him now as they did at one time."

"Saving!" Wilfrid repeated, obviously bewildered by the word. "Saving! Richard Cottier saving! Why should he save? He has plenty and to spare." Then dread gripped him and he turned to them with another question. "You don't mean to say that he's in want?"

"It'll be want of his own seeking," John Gale replied. "He's only got himself to keep. Oh no, I tell you he's just saving."

Again Wilfrid repeated the word, turned it into a sort of brief refrain; and then he seemed to forget the little band of keen, weather-scarred dalesmen, and a silence as deep almost as that which rests upon the hills in summertide fell upon them all, while this young man from the south country struggled through a maze of perplexing thought. After their own quiet fashion they watched him, and they also were puzzled in turn when they beheld the clenching of his fingers, and the lines that agony was drawing upon his face. At last he turned to them with a confession, which was really revelation, on his lips, and now their wonder gave place to hope and in the end to exultation.

"I—I'm afraid that I've been playing the part of a blind fool," he began, "but the little you have told me to-night has opened my eyes. The rest I can guess. I'm not blind now. I never thought I should need to tell—my story, any more, but, whatever the cost to myself may be, I must put the schoolmaster straight. I've tol' you of my first visit to the dale. That



"And I move that we do nothing of the sort." John Gale sprang to his feet and drove a hard fist into an equally hard palm"—p. 179.

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night I came to beg Richard Cottier to—to save me from ruin—from the brand of the convict. Now I am on my way to thank him for what he has done and to give him proof of his triumph.

"I had never seen him before, but my mother and he were—friends. She was one of the sweetest women you ever saw was that mother of mine, just the one that a lot of men would fall in love with, and Richard Cottier was one of the lot. Only she married my father instead—but right to the end she had tremendous faith in the other one, and when she was ill and knew that she wouldn't get better she told me that if ever I was on the rocks I had to come up here and tell Richard Cottier all about it.

"I never thought I should need the help of any man, but—you see I didn't know what motherhood meant. It was easy to keep straight so long as she was there. . . You've no idea what London is like when you're alone. . . I turned out a rotter. . . Got in with a fast set—picked up a taste for gambling—spent more than I earned. And then I went to a firm of sharks to help me out . . . and then I—their was money in the office—and that's how I found a prison cell waiting for me."

"Poor bit motherless bairn."

It was Mistress Gale who spoke, and when Wilfrid glanced across the hearth he saw that the tears were running down her cheeks. He fancied also that the eyes of the men were moist.

"Perhaps you can guess the rest," he went on. "I remembered the schoolmaster of Burnfoot. I came and gave him my mother's message. I won't tell you what it was—it belongs to him alone. When I went back to London the prison door was closed and I had the chance of an honest life in front of me."

"Thoo means," Thomas Salkeld asked, "that schuilmaister had paid back the money thoo'd—taken?"

"Every penny of it. And more than that. He shouldered all my debts and put himself in my place with the sharks—only from what you've told me to-night I'm afraid they've bled him badly. He'll not be used to the money tricks of some of the town men. I thought the thing was all cleared off long ago. His letters have been those of a man well content."

"And we've called him a miser—and a

selfish carl—we've despised and rejected and pointed the finger of scorn at him," John Gale half whispered; and then he turned to his friends with a suggestion whereby the revelation of the night might be made complete.

"It's a grand bit o' news that Maister Iredale has brought," he said, "and I'm thinking that for many a day our hearts will be filled with sorrow for our shortness of vision. And I'm thinking also that it's time we were setting Maister Iredale on his way to Burnfoot. The hoose of Richard Cottier is the only hoose that should give him shelter this night, and though the drifts 'll be mighty deep if the lock of us canna win through it's a pity."

A rumble of voices testified approval of the proposition; instantly every man rose and pushed back his chair. But John Gale, had still another request to make. "Before we set out," he said shyly, "I'd like us to sing the Doxology."

Two hours later, when the drifts had been conquered, they found the schoolmaster crouching over a handful of ineffective fire, and for the third time that night John Gale the silent became a man of eloquent speech.

"Maister Iredale," he said, fumbling his hat nervously yet speaking with quiet confidence, "has been telling us a bit tale, and now we've got a better grip of what the Book means when it speaks of the joy that cometh in the morning. . . I'se thinking, Maister Cottier, that you're a grand hand at the Greek and Latin, and the mysteries of mathematics are as plain to you as the sheeptrods to the shepherds on the fells, but when it comes to the handling of money you seem to be an oot an' oot failure—only your failure is a finer thing than success, and—eh, man, we wadn't have you one bit different. You've shown us what a man can do when he tries; you've proved to us how much a man can bear when he sets himself."

Cottier held up his hand in protest, but John Gale was determined to have his say. "I'm about done," he said. "There's just one thing mair. A white back, up at Underbank, we sang 'Praise God' because He had given you to be one of the men of the dale, and we'd like you to ken—this for your comfort and your strengthening in the day of toil—that whenever you come into our thoughts we shall find the same bonny bit psalm dancing on our lips."

WATCHMAN! TELL US OF THE NIGHT

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Specially composed for THE QUIVER by JOSIAH BOOTH



1. Watch - man ! tell us of the night, What its signs of pro - mise are :



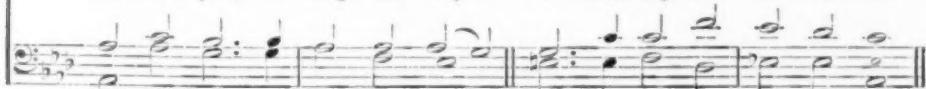
Trav - iller ! o'er yon moun - tain's height, See that glo - ry - beam - ing Star !



Watch - man ! does its beau - teous ray Aught of joy or hope fore - tell ?



Trav - iller ! yes ; it brings the day— Pro - mised day of Is - ra - el !



2. Watchman ! tell us of the night ;
Higher yet that Star ascends :
Trav'ller ! blessedness and light,
Peace and truth, its course portends !
Watchman ! will its beams alone
Gild the spot that gave them birth ?
Traveller ! ages are its own—
See, it bursts o'er all the earth !

3. Watchman ! tell us of the night,
For the morning seems to dawn :
Trav'ller ! darkness takes its flight,
Doubt and terror are withdrawn :
Watchman ! let thy wanderings cease,
Hie thee to thy quiet home :
Trav'ller ! lo, the Prince of Peace—
Lo, the Son of God is come !

SIR JOHN BOWRING.

"The Letter Killeth"

A Christmas Story

By HELEN WALLACE

(Illustrated by VICTOR PROUT)

UNDER the low, thatched roofs of the landward village of Birsie an unwonted excitement simmered that Christmas Eve.

Christmas! The very word sounded foreign to the ears of Birsie, and fell strangely from its lips. In those far-away days when London and Edinburgh were still a long week's journey apart—though the new fast coaches were a miracle of speed—and when every village and townlet was an isolated world apart, wrapped up in its own concerns, Christmas to docce Scottish folk savoured of Popish, if not of pagan observance. It seemed little removed from the Beltane rites, which were still practised here and there when the sun had reached its furthest north, and the serene, wistful midsummer gloaming lingered until merged in the brightening dawn. If the young laird's new wife had fixed her supper party for Hegmanay or Ne'erday, Birsie could have understood it, and would have trooped willingly to the festival—but Christmas! But, poor thing, she was English, and knew no better.

And up at the big white house the little bride was amazed and affronted at the doubtful reception of her invitations, and piqued by her husband's laughing, " Didn't I tell you so ? "

" Not keep Christmas!" she ejaculated in dismay. " They are no better than heathen, then, for all their kirks and Sabbaths. But I'll make them keep it, I'll make them come ; yes, and I'll make them dance too," she declared, nodding her head with all its curls.

Young Sir James had little doubt but that she would make good her word, though all he said was :

" Better get them here first, and then we can talk of dancing."

And Lady Mary, put upon her mettle, had triumphed, and for the first time since Reformation days Birsie was going " to keep Christmas," and in every house that Christmas Eve some preparation was going

forward for the great occasion. Even in Rab Plenderleith's house there was no exception, and little Lady Mary had every right to plume herself over her at least partial conquest of the old wabster (weaver).

It is needless to try to explain to which particular " straitest sect of the Pharisees " he belonged, nor how many " Thou shalt nots " he had voluntarily added to those pronounced from Sinai, which poor, frail humanity has never yet been able to keep. A stern, hard man, a natural ascetic, to whom all pleasure was doubtful if not sinful, he himself lived up to the very letter of his rigorous code. If he sought to bind heavy burdens on other men's shoulders, he laid a double load upon his own, and his sterling rectitude, his unflinching justice and honesty, compelled the respect of his neighbours, though some may have secretly wished that he would set them a less strenuous example.

It was a tribute to Lady Mary's powers that she had wrung from him an unwilling consent that his orphan niece should join the company at the Big House, though he stoutly stuck to his refusal for himself and his elderly maiden sister, long since reduced to a mere echo of himself. No Christmas for him !

Now, in the attic under the rafters, and by the glimmering light of a cruisie, Ailie, like every other girl in Birsie, was looking over her " braws." Poor child, it did not take her long. She had only her " best " frock, sacred hitherto to Sabbath wear, and even that had been handed down to her, after years of service, by her Aunt Bethia, as " good enough for Ailie."

Ailie was a slim slip of a girl, like a plant which has shot up in the shade. She was in truth :

" A maid whom there were none to praise."

It was allowed, indeed, that she had bonnie hair. It had the sheen and the changing hue of ripe, rustling sun-gilt corn,

"THE LETTER KILLETH"

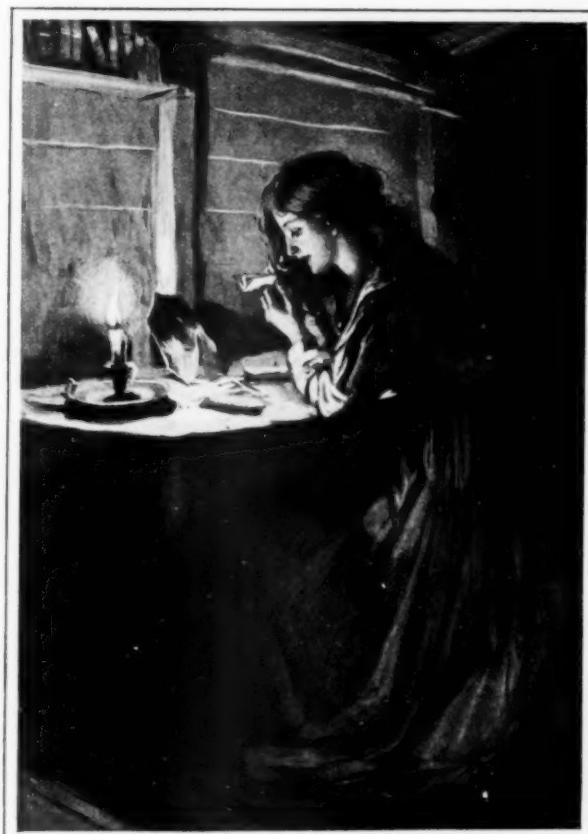
but its beauty was disguised as much as might be, since it was drawn so tightly back, and so severely flattened to her small head. If, at a kind word, the soft, blue eyes were lifted, and the little pale face flowered to its rare smile, wakening two fleeting dimples, people were startled by its sudden, wistful loveliness. But such moments were few, and little heed had hitherto been paid to Ailie. Under Rab's iron rule every innocent vanity, every girlish desire, had been so sternly repressed that Ailie had humbly accepted the clumsy gown and had worn it resignedly, without reflecting that its harsh grey made her hair look dull and her face sallow, while its stiff shapelessness masked the pliant grace of her young figure.

Of late, however, a gnawing dissatisfaction had awakened within her. The Big House, closed through the laird's long minority, had been reopened on his marriage, and peopled not only by the gentry but by a troop of serving men, and smart, strapping maidens. Among these "bonnie Bell Armour" had at once made herself a conspicuous figure—a plump, red-cheeked, black-haired lass, whose laughing eye held a lure which to many of the Birsie lads seemed irresistible.

Beside her warm, full-blooded beauty, her easy manner, and her ready tongue, gentle, shrinking Ailie was like the white morning moon fading away before the rosy flush of coming day. And alas, and alas! among those who seemed most ready to bow to that garish rising sun was Sandy Armstrong—Sandy, who had carried Ailie's books to school, with whom she had often

shared her "twal' hours," and who on one memorable day had stood up to take her "palmies" for her and had dared the dominie to "lick the lassie."

All Birsie, except Rab himself, had expected that they would marry some day. There was no worldly barrier, for Sandy had succeeded his father in the tenancy of Clayslaps farm, and was doing well. But in those days a man's conscience and his convictions could dig unfathomable gulfs between him and his neighbours. A difference of opinion, which in our easier times might seem mere hair-splitting, was a matter of life and death, especially to a man like Rab Plenderleith. Sandy Armstrong, dour lad though he might be, was



"Then with panting breath and trembling, awkward fingers began her unaccustomed—her unheard-of attempt"—p. 187.

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not "sound," Rab considered, on some minutiae of doctrine or kirk discipline—and that was enough. As a possible suitor he was thenceforth barred. Ailie's share in the matter her uncle had never considered. It was her duty to be guided by her elders and do as she was bid. That she could have any wishes of her own was too revolutionary an idea to occur to him.

Still love, which laughs at locksmiths, is not likely to be fettered by the bonds of

goddess. And if this were so in everyday life, what could be expected to-morrow night? The new maids, like their betters, had brought the new modes from Edinburgh. In what braws might Bell appear, while she—she had only Aunt Bethia's old grey gown.

A gush of salt, burning tears made the dim light of the cruisie flicker before Ailie's eyes, and blurred still more the little pale face at which she was gazing in her flawed



"Bethia flung her apron over her head. 'The Lord forgive you,' she gasped."—p. 188.

abstract theology. In the narrow bounds of village life, the lad and lass were often thrown together, and in spite of Rab matters might already have come to a crisis between them, but for the tongue-tied bashfulness which had fallen upon Sandy when boy and girl unconsciousness had passed, and for his exceeding awe of old Plenderleith—an awe which the whole community shared.

But now, instead of haunting the loanings round the weaver's cottage, Sandy was hanging about the back regions of the Big House for a smile or a word from his flaunting

handbreadth of looking-glass. Instead of it, and her smooth, tight-drawn fair hair, she was seeing Bell's ripe red and white, her saucy eyes, and those roguish black rings which curled so alluringly about her brow and her round white neck.

Suddenly Ailie gasped, a flush which might have vied with Bell's dyed her face. She had nothing but the old grey gown, there was nothing she could do to better it, but why—why should not her hair curl, too?

Ailie's breath stopped at the audacity of the thought. She had never done any-

"THE LETTER KILLETH"

thing save at her aunt's or uncle's bidding, and she had not been brought up under Rab's rule without her conscience instantly taking fright, and clamouring that it was wrong to think so much of outward things—the true adorning was of the heart. Perhaps it was, but what will a girl, waking to a knowledge of her own heart, not do to beautify herself in the eyes of the man she loves? She shook out her hair, and it fell in a glory round her slim shoulders. But the thought of Bell's clustering black ringlets blinded her to its beauty—besides, everyone was wearing curls now. She glanced fearfully round, and then with panting breath and trembling, awkward fingers began her unaccustomed—her unheard-of attempt.

Down in the kitchen Rab was sitting with his big Bible still upon his knee, but he was listening anxiously to the faint sounds overhead.

"What's the lassie doin'?" he demanded with a suddenness which made his sister, a little faded wisp of a woman, jump.

"Doin'? What should she be doin'? She went awa' to her bed, as soon as the exercises (family prayers) were over."

"Ay, and I'm dootin' if she heard a word o' them. Bethia, I'm in a sore strait," he went on solemnly. "The charge o' my puir brither's dochter's soul has been laid upon me, and I'm dootin' if I havena betrayed the trust. Against my conscience and my judgment I let myself be whillie-wha'ed by a smooth tongue to gie my consent to this carnal pleasurin', but—"

"Losh, Rab!" cried Bethia aghast, "ye'd ne'er keep her at hame the morn's nicht. The haill toon's goin' but oursel's"—even in Bethia's well-trained mind there may have been a stir of regret—"an' her heart's fair set on it."

Rab's pale eye lightened.

"Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, woman. If her heart's set on sic carnality isna it my bounden duty to wean her from it? What's the morn's nicht after a'? No more than 'the crackling o' thorns under a pot,' but for her it may well lowe into the fire that never shall be quenched. I've seen the change in her ever since I gie'd my word, an' she was fair itchlin' till I'd put by the books to-night. That bodes something. Awa' up ' see what's she doin'. Dinna let her ken."

Poor Bethia crept away towards the

ladder-like stair. In a few moments she came back, her knees knocking, her hands hanging limp, her face white.

"Oot wi' it, woman—the truth!" demanded Rab fiercely.

"Oh Rab, she's but a wean! Dinna be hard on her!" quavered Bethia. "I kennae how she's been so led astray. It was ne'er me that learned her. Weel, if I *maun* say it—" the words wrenched from her by sheer panic. "She's—she's thrang curling her hair!"

There was a dead silence. Rab's face had gone as grey as the granite of his own hills. He lifted the Bible and the crusie, and without a word went into his weaving-shop and shut the door, leaving Bethia a prey to nameless terrors.

"What *maun* I do? If I daured but gie her a gliff that her uncle kens—for Rab's an awesome man when he's roused—but I daurna."

She sat rocking herself to and fro, while slowly the "happit" fire sank to a mere speck amid the white smothering ashes. She hardly knew whether she was awake or asleep, when she looked up at last and saw her brother standing over her. She uttered a faint cry of fright as the light fell on a pair of shining shears in his hand.

"Hold your peace," he said, putting down the crusie. "I've been wrestling sore for the soul of my deid brother's child. The Lord forbid she should gang the gait he did, an' for naethin' but a bonnie face an' the trumpery gauds o' this passin' world. But if we're to save her from sic destruction, an' her feet are already on the road to it, we maun use the means. I've gotten licht at last. I could wish there was any other way, but I'm shut up to this. Awa' up an' cut ilka ane o' they sinfu' curls off her heid. That'll learn her a lesson that she'll thank us for in eternity."

He thrust the shears into Bethia's unwilling hands. They were those he used for clipping his webs, and were bright and sharp as well as strong. With a clatter they fell to the earthen floor.

"Rab, are ye daft? I canna—I daurna!" cried Bethia. "Cut the lassie's hair off! Man, do you ken what a woman's hair is to her? Even Paul himself, an' he was sair enough on women, kent what a guid heid o' hair meant to her."

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"I hope I ken what her soul's salvation is to her, Bethia. Would I bid you do this if I didna believe it was the Lord's will?" said Rab solemnly. "Doesna He bid us cut off the right haun' rather than gang wi' twa into hell?"

"Ay, nae doot, I'm no denyin' the Scriptures," faltered Bethia. "But, oh, Rab," in a last desperate outburst, "Ailie's bonnie hair—"

"Bethia, unless you're willing to have the lassie's blood on your soul, you'll do as I bid you. Do you think I'm eident to do it, or that I've spent a' they hours wrestling in vain?"

Of the man's desperate earnestness, of his utter conviction, there could be no doubt. He believed that thus, and thus only, could he snatch a young life from the jaws of destruction. What he believed, that he would do, though the sweat of the conflict still glistened on the furrowed brow.

Shaking like an aspen, Bethia climbed the stair. Rab followed her with the cruisie. Outside the door he thrust the light into her hand.

"I'll bide here till it's done. Think o' the everlasting burning," he uttered in a hard whisper.

Thus adjured, Bethia stole into the attic. The floating wick of the cruisie made a fearsome play of light and shadow amid the rafters overhead. Black wings seemed to unfold and to rustle about her, dark, awful shapes to dart forward, as she dragged herself towards the bed where Ailie lay, sunk in her first, deep sleep. She had covered her head with a little shawl, but it had fallen back, revealing the grotesque paper horns which stuck out at every angle. But no ghost of a smile wavered on Bethia's quivering mouth. For a long minute she looked down on the peaceful face, which seemed all the more child-like for the ludicrous setting. The appeal of its sweet youth, of its utter trustful helplessness knocked at Bethia's heart. Something rose up within her, and drove even her submissive spirit into flat revolt.

"I canna do it," she whispered hoarsely to Rab. "Gang len an' look at the pair lamb, sleeping like a bit wean, an' then if it maun be done, do it yourself—if you hae the heart."

Rab looked at her—his pale, flinty eyes a stare, his grim jaw set.

"Gie me the shears," was all he said. Bethia flung her apron over her head.

"The Lord forgie you," she gasped, as she stumbled blindfold down the break-neck stair.

"You're not dancing, Mr. Armstrong. Can't you please yourself with a partner?" laughed Lady Mary, a slim figure in the scanty muslin frock of the day, pausing before Sandy, who stood alone in a corner.

As her husband said, she had brought her horses to the water—the great echoing barn was crowded—but it had been another thing to make them drink. Even she had had some difficulty in getting the people to enjoy themselves, as she considered it, but the excellent supper had had its due effect, and youth and nature had done the rest. Though the elder folk looked somewhat doubtfully on, dancing was going on merrily enough, and at first Sandy had taken his full share. Bell was gracious, and was even more "braw" than poor Ailie could have pictured. She was fully aware what an excellent "dow-n-sitting" Clayslaps would be for her, and she thought it might spur the young man on to see that there were many rivals. But she had carried her game too far. She roused Sandy's dour pride, and he withdrew, sullen and offended, from the contest.

Now he began to wonder why Ailie was not there. Could Rab, whom Sandy inwardly characterised as "an awfu' man," have kept her at home? Or could she have been waiting for him to come and act escort, as hitherto he had secretly done to such sober outings as Rab considered "allowable to professors"? Sandy's heart smote him at the thought, and all the more because he had consciously shirked the duty. What would Bell have thought if he had presented himself so publicly with Ailie? But now the pendulum began to swing back. Bell could dance and rant with everybody. Her bold black eyes had a smile for every man in the room—Ailie's rarely lifted blue eyes had kindled only for him, as Sandy uneasily remembered. And now came Lady Mary with her question.

"Perhaps it is that the right partner isn't here?" she added archly. "I did hope to give that poor little girl a night's pleasure. She looks as if she needed someone to be good to her. I suppose that grim old man

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must have kept her at home. It must be dreadful to think it wicked only to be happy"—plaintively. "But if I were a young man, I vow I'd have carried her off from her jailer—eh, Mr. Sandy?"

With a smile Lady Mary passed on. For a moment Sandy stood still, his mind in a turmoil, then he suddenly turned from the blazing lights and the jigging music of the country-dance, and set his face towards the darkling road to the village.

"Whaur's Ailie? What for is she no at the Big Hoose?" Sandy demanded abruptly when the door of the weaver's cottage was opened a cautious crack.

"She's—she's no weel," stammered Bethia.

"No weel! She was fine yestreen. Tell her I've come for her—stop, let me ben and I'll tell her myself!" added Sandy hastily.

"No, no, you canna come ben—no the nicht," exclaimed Bethia, but when Sandy took the law into his own hands and pushed the door wide, her resistance collapsed.

"You maunna blame me, Sandy. It's no my doin'—as sure's death it isna," she wailed.

Sandy stared at her in vague alarm. Rab was indeed "an awfu' man," and it had cost Sandy a certain qualm thus boldly to enter his house; but after all what could Rab do? He did not know what he feared, as he pushed past the trembling woman into



"Ailie, come down this minute," he cried, his voice sharp with alarm."

the kitchen, dimly lit by the smouldering peats.

"Ailie," he called, "Ailie, are you here? I've come for you."

There was no sound but the tick-tick of the wag-at-the-wa' clock. He strode across to the stair foot. A faint stifled sob struck on his ear.

"Ailie, come down this minute," he cried, his voice sharp with alarm. "It's me, Sandy, I've come for you. Nobody'd touch you—they'd better no"—clenching a big fist.

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There was a pause, then a dragging footstep sounded above. Ailie had been so schooled to obedience that she had no thought of resisting the peremptory command. Her head was muffled in her shawl. In the dim light, her face was a mere white patch.

"What's the matter? What for are you dennin' here, when a' Birsie is dancin'?" exclaimed Sandy.

"Dance? No more dancin' for me," cried Ailie on the rise of a sob. Then, with an effort at control: "It's—it's the earache—it was that awfu' bad—"

"Earache!" broke in Sandy. "That wadna ha' kept you. There's something under this—let's see," and he drew her towards the fire, while with the other hand he caught up the poker and stirred the peats to a light flame.

"No, no," screamed Ailie, struggling against his hold. "I canna—you maunna—I canna thole it."

The shawl slipped from her head, and Sandy, poker in hand, stood staring at her, transfixed.

With a shriek, Ailie clapped her hands to her head and tried to dart away, but Sandy had her fast.

What ailed the girl? She was oddly changed. Then in the flickering fire-dance he saw that the shining mass of hair was gone; the little head was as bare as a shorn sheep, save for one or two stubbly elf-locks, sticking out here and there.

"The awld deevil!" ejaculated Sandy, getting his breath at last.

"Let me go—let me go!" sobbed Ailie, beating frantically with her little fists against his broad chest. "Awa' back to the Hoose—awa' back to—to—it's a' by wi' me. Maybe it was wrong to think so muckle o' my hair—but if he had but tell't me. I never did aught that he didna ken in a' my life before, but—but I wanted to be a bit braw," pitcously, "an' I put a bit curl or two in my hair last night, and he—he— Oh—oh—oh—what'll I do now? I'll ne'er dare show my face in the

kirk or in Birsie street again." Then, with a sudden flame of passion: "You can laugh if you like, Sandy Armstrong—you and—and Bell Armour."

Her voice broke, the spurt of despairing defiance passed into agonised sobbing. Sandy gathered her to his breast and held her close. She had been trying to make herself braw for him. He felt it—he knew it, and it was for him that his little comrade, his life-long love had been put to this shame. The core of true manliness was pierced.

"Ailie, my bonnie doo, dinna greet," he murmured consolingly. "Your bonnie hair'll grow again, it's no like an airm or a leg, thank the Lord."

"But my mind's made up," he said with slow decision. "I've been a fool about Bell, like the other lads, but that's by and done with. She'll get plenty o' joes, she's owre many for me already. But if you'll take me, Ailie, I'm waitin', and so is Clayslaps, but I'll wait on Rab's biddin' no longer. I carena a button noo fer what he thinks or says. If this is what his conscience an' his scruples an' a' the rest o't has brought him to, we can do without them, though his conscience has served me weel this time, so I daurna complain. I'll awa' to the minister this verra night—not a word, that's settled," as the girl attempted some inaudible protest. "The next dance'll be for oor weddin', and Rab may throw an' gairn as he likes. But if man or wife or wean in a' Birsie mints to laugh at you, or even to glower, they'll no do it a second time, or my name's no Sandy Armstrong."

Then with a great laugh of joyful relief: "But I maunna be too hard on Rab, puir man, for wha kens, if it hadnna been for this," his big hand fondling the cropped head, which had sunk against the breast which would be its shield and bulwark henceforth, "I might, big silly fool that I was, ne'er have found my tongue an' let my luck go by. You winna grudge your hair noo, Ailie?"—gently. "If I live, God hearin' me, I'll make it up to you."





CHRISTMAS CAKES

By BLANCHE ST. CLAIR

THE making and baking of the Christmas cake is one of the few old-time ceremonies which is still honoured in many households. In most cases it is made from a recipe which has been handed down from generation to generation by the housewife's ancestresses, and a Yuletide without such a cake would be considered deficient and incomplete, especially by the younger members of the family.

The success of a Christmas cake depends largely on the time allowed for the careful preparation of the various ingredients, and the accurate knowledge of mixing them. To these must be added an intimate acquaintance with the idiosyncrasies of the oven in which the cake is to be baked; and if grandeur in the form of icing or other decoration is to be added, a study of this branch of culinary art is also advisable.

There is no reason, however, why, with the necessary time at her disposal, and a proper attention to the above-mentioned details concerning the mixing and cooking, the amateur should not delight her family and friends with a Christmas cake which is pleasing alike to the epicurean palate and the artistic eye as is the most professional production.

The composition of fruit cakes consists chiefly of flour, butter, eggs, fruit, and sugar, and there is no doubt that the best ingredients are the cheapest in the end. A new baking tin of the required size should also be provided, and several sheets of white kitchen paper.

Preparing the Ingredients

It is hardly necessary to remind the skilled housewife that dryness and cleanliness

of the various component parts are important factors in obtaining a satisfactory result, but the inexperienced cake-maker does not always realise how much depends on the carrying out of these precautions.

The flour should be placed on a large dish, either in front of the fire or on the plate-warmer over the stove, and constantly turned over with a fork so that every particle is thoroughly dried. It must then be sifted through a sieve to allow the air to penetrate. Many cakes are rendered sodden and heavy from a disregard of these details. The flour should be weighed *after* it is dried and sieved.

Currents and sultanas should be put in a colander, washed in lukewarm water and well dried on a clean cloth. Then spread the fruit on a dish and dry it in the same manner as the flour. Good fruit should not contain the grits or little stones which are to be found in the inferior qualities, but it is always advisable to search for these. It is most unpleasant to suddenly bite on a hard substance, to say nothing of the disastrous effect on the teeth, or, if swallowed, the stone may easily set up inflammation resulting in appendicitis.

Raisins must also be washed and dried, after which the seeds are taken out with the least possible waste of pulp. It greatly facilitates matters to have a bowl of warm water by one's side when doing this, in which the fingers and knife are dipped from time to time.

It is, I think, an excusable extravagance to use the best butter for this kind of cake. In all rich fruit cakes the butter is creamed, and although there are several machines for doing

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this, the old-fashioned way of beating it with the hand is really the best.

Candied peel is cut into shreds, the finer it is cut the more the flavour is distributed throughout the cake. The sugar is removed from the peel before it is weighed, and this can be crushed and included in the given quantity of loaf or castor sugar.

In cakes of this description the yolks and whites of the eggs are, as a rule, whipped together, after the "eyes" have been carefully taken away. Stale or so-called "cooking eggs" will not whip well, and each egg should be broken separately and its freshness ascertained before it is mixed with the others.

If almonds or nuts are used these must be blanched, i.e. soaked in boiling water until the skins can be easily removed. They may be chopped or pounded in a mortar—in the latter case, a few drops of orange or rose-water will prevent their becoming oily. The paper used for lining the baking tin should be as thick as good writing-paper, and be plenteously spread with butter. It is advisable to put several layers at the bottom, the paper being trimmed to the size of the tin. The sides are lined with paper, also well buttered, standing four or five inches above the edge of the tin, and two or three pieces should be buttered for use on the top of the cake if it shows signs of getting too brown before it is cooked through.

Testing the Oven

As much of the success of the cake depends on the cooking, great attention must be paid to this operation. The fire should be made up and the right heat of the oven obtained before the mixing of the ingredients commences. The heat may be tested as follows: Place several small pieces of white paper in the centre of the oven shelf, and if they turn a golden brown in two or three minutes, the oven is ready to receive the cake. If the paper remains white, the oven is not hot enough, and it stands to reason that if too hot the paper will be burnt. In the last case the heat can be speedily reduced by opening the oven door and placing a saucer of cold water on the shelf, and to increase the heat put on more coal and pull out the oven dampers. The test should be repeated until the correct heat is obtained. To maintain the same temperature for several hours (and a large Christmas cake

takes a considerable length of time to cook), the fire must never be allowed to die down, a few pieces of coal added every quarter of an hour will serve to keep up an even heat. To ascertain when the cake is done, thrust a bright skewer into the centre, let it remain there for two or three seconds, and should it come out quite clean, take the cake out of the oven at once. If any paste adheres to the skewer, continue the baking. It is not necessary to open the oven door to examine the cake more than once every quarter of an hour, and then expedition, and caution in shutting the door gently, must be observed. When the cake is cooked it must be handled with care. It should be lifted out of the tin and stood on a sieve, placed in a warm corner free from draughts and cold air.

A rich fruit cake is all the better for keeping, and should be made two or three weeks before it is required. When quite cold, put the cake in an airtight tin, leaving the paper on.

To Ice the Cake

The icing should not be added until a couple of days before the cake is to be cut. To ice a large cake whisk the whites of five eggs stiff enough to bear the weight of an egg. This can only be achieved successfully in a cold room, using new-laid eggs. Then gradually mix with them two pounds of very dry sieved icing sugar; lastly, add a teaspoonful of lemon juice that has been strained through a double thickness of muslin. Place the cake on an inverted cake-tin, somewhat smaller than the cake, and spread the icing over the sides and top of the cake with a piece of cardboard or the broad blade of a bread knife. Dry the icing very slowly in a cool oven. Further ornamentation in the form of fondants, chocolates, crystallised fruits, etc., may be added according to the taste and fancy of the cake-maker. The icing may be tinted pink with cochineal, yellow with saffron, green with spinach colouring, or brown with chocolate.

In the event of no family recipe being at hand, the following may be useful to the enthusiastic housewife.

A Christmas Cake

Ingredients: 1 lb. butter, 1½ lb. flour, 1 lb. loaf sugar, 1 lb. currants (or half currants and half sultanas), 8 eggs, 1 oz. candied



GERTRUDE A. STEIN

ALL'S WELL

(Drawn by Gertrude A. Stein.)

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orange peel, 1 oz. candied lemon peel, 3 oz. citron peel, 1 oz. sweet almonds.

Method: Having carefully prepared all the ingredients, mix them thus: Beat the butter to a cream and dredge in the flour gradually with the left hand hen add the sugar, fruit and almonds. Whisk the eggs and mix them very thoroughly with the dry ingredients. This cake should be beaten for twenty minutes before it is put in the tin. It will require two hours' baking in a moderate oven.

A Raisin Cake

Ingredients: 1½ lb. flour, 1 lb. butter, 6 eggs, 1 lb. sugar, 1 small nutmeg, 1 lb. raisins, and a small teaspoonful of bicarbonate of soda dissolved in a tablespoonful of hot water.

Method: Beat the butter lightly to a cream and add the flour gradually. Separate the yolks and whites of the eggs, stir the former with the sugar, and add to the butter and flour. Whisk the whites and add them, and finally the grated nutmeg and soda. Beat the whole mixture till it is light and creamy, then add the raisins. Pour into a papered tin and bake for 1½ hours. N.B.—The raisins should be slightly floured—this prevents them sinking to the bottom of the cake.

As these recipes are somewhat expensive, and the cakes too rich to be partaken of indiscriminately, I have appended others which are seasonable and will be found useful for everyday use. They can be made before the holidays commence, and, if stored in closely-lidded tins, will keep fresh for some time:

Oatmeal Biscuits

6 oz. flour, 5 oz. fine oatmeal, 4 oz. clarified dripping, a teaspoonful of baking powder, 1 egg, a pinch of salt, and a little milk. Mix the flour, oatmeal, salt and baking powder well together, then rub in the dripping. Beat the egg thoroughly, stir it into the other ingredients, then add sufficient milk to make a rather stiff paste. Put this on a pastry board, roll it out to an even thickness of $\frac{1}{4}$ in., cut into rounds with a pastry cutter or the lid of a tin, put the biscuits on a baking sheet and bake in a moderate oven for about twenty minutes.

Little Cakes Without Butter

Put a breakfastcupful of flour, the same quantity of sugar, and $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. of chopped

almonds in a basin. Mix well together and add 1 well-beaten egg. Drop the mixture in very small knobs on to a greased tin and bake in a moderate oven for a quarter of an hour.

Delicious Cocoanut Cakes

½ lb. castor sugar, 2 oz. butter, 2 eggs, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. desiccated cocoanut, a breakfastcupful of flour, the same of milk, 2 full teaspoons of baking powder, a few crystallised cherries. Warm the butter, but do not oil it, and mix the sugar with it. Beat the eggs in the milk and add gradually to the butter and sugar, whisking lightly all the time. Next add the cocoanut and flour, and lastly the baking powder. The success of these little cakes depends chiefly on the way in which the ingredients are mixed together. The dry quantities must be sifted in gradually with the left hand, whilst the right is gently beating the mixture. Pour a little of the batter into each buttered patty-pan and bake. When nicely browned, place half a cherry on the top of each cake.

Shrewsbury Cakes

½ lb. flour, 4 oz. butter, 5 oz. castor sugar, the well-beaten yolks of 2 eggs. Rub the butter into the flour, add the sugar and yolks. Put the paste on a board, roll it out to an even thickness, cut into rounds, lay the cakes on buttered paper on a baking sheet and cook them in a moderate oven.

Alpha Rocks

Beat 6 oz. of butter to a cream and stir in gradually $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of flour and 6 oz. of castor sugar. When well mixed add 2 oz. of blanched and chopped sweet almonds and a well-beaten egg. Drop the cakes off a fork on to a buttered baking tin and bake them for twenty minutes in a warm oven.

Gingerbread Nuts

Put 1 lb. of flour into a basin with a pinch of salt, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. of ground ginger, 3 oz. of moist sugar, 1 teaspoonful of bicarbonate of soda, and, if liked, a little allspice. Warm $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of treacle and 4 oz. of butter with 2 tablespoonsfuls of milk. When these are well melted together mix them with the other ingredients, making a stiff paste. Turn on to a board, divide into about twenty-four pieces, roll each into a ball, and place them about two inches apart on a greased tin. Bake for a quarter of an hour.

THE SUCCESSFUL HOSTESS

By PRISCILLA CRAVEN

"SHE is a born hostess!" Who has not heard the phrase?

But if a few women are given a talent for entertaining by their fairy godmother at birth, there are more, many more, who have to laboriously acquire the art. For it is an art, and we cannot expect to blossom out into a full blown successful hostess at our first party. We shall make little mistakes, we shall unconsciously say and do the wrong thing, but with entertaining as with most other things, *experientia docet*. We shall profit by our first mistakes, and we shall realise—and this is a big step in the right direction—that there are certain rules of the game, which, if we would come out on the winning side, must be observed. Shall we run over a few of these rules and see if we can profit by other people's experience?

The Shy Hostess

Social amenities in the form of dinners, "at homes," and receptions are often a great trial to the young wife. She is shy, and she is sometimes over-anxious. She gets no pleasure out of her visitors, and when the last one leaves she sinks into a chair and exclaims, with a deep sigh of relief, "Thank goodness, that's over." Now this is a thousand pities. Entertaining should be a pleasure not only to the entertained, but to the hostess, for most of us are of a gregarious nature and we ought to take a pleasure in meeting our fellow creatures. "Oh! but it's such a trouble," I hear someone exclaim. Are you sure you don't make the trouble? Are you certain that you go the right way to work? Don't you think you might avoid some of the worries of entertaining by a little more method, a little more common sense?

Don't Attempt the Impossible

And that brings me to the first rule of the game—*don't attempt the impossible!* Oh! but so many people do, you know. Mrs. A, who keeps one servant, has been to dinner at the house of Mrs. B, who keeps three. When she returns Mrs. B's hospitality, she tries to have as elaborate a dinner as her friend. Well, it's impossible. If you keep on counting one maid over and over again you can't by any process of

arithmetic turn her into three. This is one of the reasons why so many women fail to be good hostesses. They attempt too much. They will not cut their pattern according to their cloth. They will persist in trying to cut the cloth according to someone else's pattern. Recognise your limitations, either of money, house-room, servants or ability. Never over-crowd your rooms—what is more unpleasant than to be packed like sardines into a small drawing-room at an "at home"?—and do not overtax your servants. They sometimes like the excitement and bustle of a big dinner, but they are not superhuman, and they get tired. And do not try to do too much yourself beforehand, for if you are giving a party you will find it hard work keeping the ball rolling and looking after everyone's comfort. So do not start the evening half-tired. Good spirits have a great deal to do with entertaining.

To Do and Say the Right Thing

The French have a word that it is almost impossible to translate, but *savoir-faire* means roughly the ability always to do and say the right thing. The woman who has this quality is never nonplussed or ill at ease; she welcomes a duchess with the same grace as the wife of a shopkeeper; she will know how to say a few words of special greeting to everyone; she will know how to fill an awkward pause or turn a conversation that she does not wish pursued. *Savoir-faire* is of inestimable value to the woman who wishes to be a successful hostess. In fact, she must have it, whether consciously or unconsciously. Generally it comes by experience. A young girl cannot be expected to possess it. Mixing freely with many people is the best way to acquire it. It is a sort of polish which grows brighter by contact with one's fellow creatures. If anything goes wrong with her party the woman with *savoir faire* will never allow herself to be flustered, or, worse still, show annoyance. Nothing makes your guests more uncomfortable than to show them that you are worried or cross. If you have to reprove the servants, do so afterwards; pass off a little accident with a gay laugh or a little joke.

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Another very important rule of the game is—don't try to bring the wrong people together. Don't write down names haphazard from your address book, or ask so-and-so because it is his or her turn. One of the secrets of successful entertaining is—select your guests with the greatest care. Don't ask Aunt Maria, who is sixty and very old-fashioned, to meet the latest thing in musical composers, and don't ask cousin Dick, who is a dancing man, and fond of a good joke, to have dinner with your friend Amy, who has no sense of humour and only talks about district visiting. Be you ever so good a hostess in yourself you cannot make oil and water mix. I once went to a most excellent dinner where everybody was seated next to the wrong person. The dinner itself was most carefully planned, the flowers were beautiful, and most of the guests were distinguished, but because the hostess had not taken any trouble to think out which people would like to sit together, the whole affair was a dismal failure. Occasionally, of course, you do not know your guests' likes or dislikes, their hobbies or their capabilities, and then you have to take chances, but this does not very often happen. Don't shuffle people together like you would a pack of cards—pair them off with precision.

Strike Some Individual Note

If you want to be known as a popular hostess strike some individual note. Don't have your parties just like other people's. Make them a little different in some way or another—either food, music, or diversions. We all love novelties, especially in entertaining. Don't be afraid of trying new saws. Don't always keep to the beaten track. And this may be the salvation of the woman who is perhaps less well off than many of her more fortunate neighbours. She cannot out-do them in splendour or vie with them in luxury, but she can do something quite different which will not suggest any comparisons. The most successful hostess I know is a woman who is not at all well blessed with this world's goods, but she has any amount of bright and novel ideas, and an invitation to her house is eagerly sought after. If she gives a dinner party she always has one or two unusual dishes that perhaps she has invented herself or unearthed from some cookery book, or she has uncom-

mon fruit for dessert, or she brews the Turkish coffee herself at table instead of the usual cups handed round, or she does some quaint thing with a chafing dish if it is a small party. She decorates her table unlike anyone else. She will utilise uncommon flowers or branches of shrubs that produce a piquant effect. These little things take no more trouble and very often cost less than more conventional ways. Remember variety is the spice of life, and amusement is the salt of entertaining.

A Few Practical Hints

Now for a few quite practical hints that may possibly be of service, especially to the novice. Don't, as I said before, attempt too much, even if you can get in extra labour. Extra servants for an occasion are not usually very successful. They do not know where the things are kept nor how you are accustomed to have things done. A woman to wash up or open the door is always quite safe, but don't expect much from the person who comes in to "oblige" for a few hours. She is seldom worth what you pay her.

Try and economise work. If it is a dinner party make out a menu that can be largely prepared beforehand. Have cold sweets got ready the previous day. Have the soup prepared also the day before and made ready to heat up. If your cook is inclined to get flurried don't ask her to cook fried fillets of sole or anything that requires very careful and sustained attention. She cannot fry, watch the vegetables, and baste the poultry all at the same time. It is far better to have plain fare well cooked, than ambitious dishes indifferently served. And especially if you have a new cook, don't invite a big dinner party till you are quite sure she can manage it. Perhaps she came to you with the best testimonials, but people's ideas of capability vary.

Be sure that all the dishes that are not meant to be cold are sent up piping hot. Nothing is more disagreeable than a half cold dish that has been standing about in the kitchen for some time. If you have only one servant, don't expect too much from her in the way of waiting at table. It is better to be rather informal than have a long wait between the courses. In such a case particularly good management is required, for practically everything must be ready

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before the guests arrive. You should have dishes that can be kept warm in the oven without deterioration. Such things as omelettes, soufflées, fritters, etc., are ruined if they are not served the moment they are cooked. Make up for the simplicity of the meal by sparkling conversation and good spirits—animal, I mean !

"At Homes"

With regard to "at homes," which are usually rather dull functions, isn't it better to have two or three "at homes" than one very crowded one ? If you have a long visiting list, have your friends in batches on separate days. You will be able to find time to talk to them and they will have what they came for, the pleasure of talking to you. Some discrimination should be shown even in an "at home." Don't have too many sweet cakes, have some dainty and appetising little sandwiches, such as cucumber, nut, anchovy, foie gras. These are usually much appreciated and they are very little trouble to eat. Always make the men on such occasions look after the women. Send them laughingly around with cups of tea and plates of cake. If you are giving a large "at home" with music, it is better to have the tea served from a large table in the dining-room, and then the guests, having refreshed themselves, will be at liberty to go into the drawing-room and hear the music. It is impossible to have tea and music at the same time. It is not fair to the performers or the guests.

Don't introduce a guest to half-a-dozen people at a time. Nothing is more embarrassing or confusing than a string of names when you cannot catch one. At an "at home" it is only polite to speak to the person next to you, and your guests should know this and not need much introducing.

But here again, make a point of bringing choice spirits together. If you have a musician calling it is better to conduct him to a seat beside a fellow enthusiast, than to anchor him beside a girl whose only passion is golf.

When you are a hostess you cannot give much time to any one person. You must flit like a bee from flower to flower, talking pictures here and gardening there, cookery across the way and the summer holidays by the tea-table. And don't, whatever you do, give your visitors stewed tea ! Instruct the servant to change the tea-pot frequently. Oh ! what I have suffered from stewed tea !

Plan all the Arrangements

Whether you entertain on a small or a large scale the hostess herself must plan all the arrangements down to the smallest details. Plan the work even if it is not necessary to carry it out yourself. If you organise well and the domestic machinery is good you need do very little, but don't leave the thinking out to the machinery. Plan things well beforehand, don't leave anything till the last minute.

Just aim at being yourself when you are entertaining. If you are self-conscious you will make your guests feel uncomfortable. Cultivate all the tact you can, because tact is a very present help to the would-be successful hostess. It rounds many ugly corners and smooths over rough surfaces. And lastly, be bright and jolly. Everyone likes a jolly, good-tempered woman who does not make a trouble of living, and who is always pleased to see you. It is a delight to go and visit such a one. Why, a good laugh is often better than the richest fare, and a sweet smile than all the expensive wines that ever came out of a cellar.

Enjoy yourself as a hostess and your guests will enjoy your entertaining.

NOTE.—Writers in the "Home Department" will always be pleased to answer any enquiries on subjects dealt with by them in these pages. Will readers please note, however, that all letters requiring an answer must have a stamped envelope enclosed ? Letters should be addressed, "Home Department, THE QUIVER Office, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C."

Dickie the Dauntless

A Christmas Story for the Children

By MARGARET BATCHELOR

I

"GRANDPAPA WILL SEE"

IT was a bitter December day. Little Dick Gurney's fingers were blue with the cold as he ran along Oxford Street, clutching a packet of papers under his thin arm as he called out in a shrill voice, "Five o'clock speshul—speshul." He was a boy of about thirteen years, but so small, he might easily have passed for nine; however, if he was small in size, his face wore a look of careworn thought and responsibility far beyond his age.

Oxford Street was crowded with Christmas shoppers. Smart nurses with their charges, ladies warmly clad in furs, thronged the busy thoroughfare, as Dick dodged amongst the taxis and buses selling a paper to whom he could; the day was going badly with him, people seemed so busy shopping they did not want an evening paper. Presently he spied a portly old gentleman beckoning to him from a hansom, stopped by the traffic. At the same instant a shrill scream rang out, and across the road he saw a tiny girl pointing wildly at a doll she had dropped in crossing. Dick let the old gentleman go, he could buy a paper from another boy, the doll must be saved for the little girl; he plunged in between the motors, and for a moment was lost, to reappear with the doll in his hand.

"Here yer are, miss," he said; "it ain't 'urt to speak of." Then taking up his cry of "Five o'clock speshul," he was running onwards, before the little girl could thank him.

"Oh! Stop. Please. Boy," she called after him imperiously. Dickie turned back reluctantly; but there was a note of command in that voice, and he obeyed.

She was a pretty, dark-eyed child; an oldish woman, evidently her nurse, held her by the hand.

"Oh, boy," she said reproachfully. "Why did you run away like that when I wanted to thank you for saving my dear Mary Matilda? I really b'lieve my heart

would have been broken if she had been hurt, and if you'd been run over in saving her what should I have done?"

Dickie smiled at this old-fashioned speech.

"It's nothing, missic," he said shyly.

"Now we must go on, Miss Olive; or your grannie will think you are lost," said the nurse. "Here is a shilling for your trouble, little boy."

A shilling was a large sum to Dickie, but he hadn't picked up the doll for the sake of money, and he hesitated to take it.

The child's sympathetic mind grasped this. "I want you to come to my Christmas tree, boy," she said. "Will you?"

"Oh, miss. What will your grannie say?" said nurse, looking at Dickie's shabby clothes.

"Grannie said I could ask whoever I liked, and I like to ask this boy. He has a nice face, and I know he would love to see my Christmas tree. Wouldn't you? What is your name?"

Dickie's face flushed, he was very conscious of his clothes and red hands, also of the group of people who were gathered around eagerly listening to all that went on.

"My name is Dickie Gurney, miss."

"Miss, we must come on. See how everyone is listening," said nurse, in a low, agitated voice.

"But where does he live? I must know," said the child, "so that I can invite him properly."

"Oh, very well," said nurse, sighing. "Where do you live, little boy?"

"I live at 3, Primrose Lane, ma'am. It's at the back of St. Paul's like," said Dickie; then determined to be brave and say what was in his mind he added: "She's a real little lady to think of asking me to her Christmas tree. And I'll always remember it. But such things are not for such as I," looking at his threadbare clothes. "Thanking her kindly all the same," and so saying he darted away like a bird and was lost in the gathering gloom, while Olive and her nurse went back to their cosy nursery.

DICKIE THE DAUNTELESS

After tea Olive went to the drawing-room to see her grandmother and grandfather; to the little girl this was the most looked-forward-to time of the day. To-night she was full of her doll's adventure and the gallant rescue.

"And I've invited him to my Christmas tree," she ended by saying.

"But, my dear, he is quite a poor boy, nurse tells me; he would feel out of place amongst your little friends in their pretty dresses. Besides, we do not know anything about him," said her grandmother.

Olive's face fell. "He is a nice boy, I know he is, grannie, and he looked so poor and hungry; you know when you read to me on Sunday from the Bible book, and told me about the *first* Christmas, you said we should be kind to poor people at Christmas; when I saw Dickie I thought he was just such a one as I should like to have at my tree. The other children who are coming have heaps of toys and are never really hungry, but Dickie looks so thin, Do, please do say 'yes,' grannie."

Olive's grandfather, who, though he had a paper in front of his face, had been really listening to the conversation, here joined in.

"Did you drop your doll in Oxford Street?" he asked. "For this afternoon I beckoned to a boy when I was stopped there by the traffic to bring me a paper, and then I saw him dart away to pick up a doll."

"Yes, grandfather, it was in Oxford Street. How *very* exciting that you should have been there."

"It was so nice of the boy to pick up a doll for a child instead of selling the paper. I noticed his face; a very honest one, I thought."

"Then shall he come to the tree?" asked the grandmother.

"We'll see," said the old gentleman. "We'll see, what we will see," and Olive had to be content with that.

II

A SURPRISE FOR ALL

"DICKIE, dear, put the kettle on, for it is Christmas Eve, and we will have a cup of tea"—so spoke a frail-looking woman from a basket-chair, which was drawn up by a tiny fire.

"Then, mother, will you tell us stories of when you were a girl in Cornwall, and about the squire's Christmas tree?" asked a child huddled in an old shawl at her feet.

"Yes, Olive, and Dickie must tell us again about the little lady and her doll and the shilling."

"That I will," said Dickie, who was carrying a kettle to the fire. "That shilling came in fine and handy. Just right to buy the coals and tea for Christmas Eve. Not that I did it to be paid for it; but she was a real little lady, called the same name



"I came from my little grand-daughter, Olive Treherne, to ask Dickie to her Christmas tree on Boxing Day"—p. 200.

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as you, Olive. She wanted me to come to her Christmas tree, she did."

"Bless her heart," began Mrs. Gurney, to break off abruptly into a fit of coughing.

Just then a knock sounded on the door, and Mary, the second girl, ran to answer it.

"Does Dickie Gurney live here?" asked a deep voice.

Mary was so surprised to see a tall, venerable old gentleman on the threshold, that she quite lost her tongue; and her brother answered for her.

"That's me, sir," he said, dropping the teapot he had in his hand, as he recognised the old gentleman of the hansom of the previous day.

"Ask the gentleman to come in," said Mrs. Gurney, much wondering what this visit meant. She tried to rise and drop a curtsey, but weak for want of food she sank into her chair.

"Don't get up," said the visitor in a kindly way, looking hastily around the clean but terribly poverty-stricken room. "I came from my little grand-daughter, Olive Treherne, to ask Dickie to her Christmas tree on Boxing Day."

"Olive Treherne," murmured Mrs. Gurney. "I knew a lady once, a Miss Olive Treherne—my Olive's called after her. She was Squire Treherne's daughter, of Oldcombe Manor. But she's dead these many years."

"She was my daughter, I am Squire Treherne!" exclaimed the old gentleman, astonished; "and you are?"

"I am Pollie Southcote, sir. You remember Pollie at the lodge? I married Peter Gurney, sir, and we came to London; we thought to do well up here, but times were against us, first one thing and then another. Then Peter got very ill and died last spring. Since then we've done the best we could. Dickie has been a real help. Oh, how often have I thought of the old days, and longed to be back in Cornwall. But I shall never go back now."

"Don't say that," said Mr. Treherne, looking much touched. "To think Olive's Christmas tree should be the means of my finding you. Why, of course I remember Pollie Southcote. You shall see Oldcombe again, never fear. You must let me help you for the sake of old times. When you have had good nourishing food you will be a different woman. Then back you shall

come to Cornwall; strangely enough, the lodge is empty; how would you like to be lodge-keeper? This fine little chap can run errands and the girls go to the school—the school you went to when a girl, Pollie. How will that be?"

"It's too good to be true, I think, sir. You don't know how often I have built a castle in the air, how we'd all go back to the country, and to think of it coming true!" said Mrs. Gurney, her eyes filling with tears.

Mr. Treherne stayed a little while longer, then, having given Dickie some money to get new clothes for himself and his sisters to wear to Olive's Christmas tree, he hustled home to tell the news to Mrs. Treherne.

* * * * *

On Boxing Day the little Gurneys arrived at the Treherne's big house in Cadogan Square; they felt very shy, but Olive came to welcome them, and soon they were so taken up with looking at the monster Christmas tree, on which there were many nice presents for them, that they forgot to be shy any longer.

Early in the new year the Gurneys moved back to Cornwall, and were installed in Pollie Gurney's old home.

"It seems like a beautiful dream, ma'am," said she one day to Mrs. Treherne, looking around the cheerful, homely kitchen. "Do you remember, ma'am, my coming to your Sunday class when I was a maiden, and your teaching me the Psalms? I have often said over a verse from one of them: 'Then are they glad, because they are at rest; and so He bringeth them into the haven where they would be.' Now, indeed, I am in a haven," she ended with a sigh of satisfaction.

"It all came from Dickie picking up my grand-daughter's doll," said Mrs. Treherne.

"And from Miss Olive's kind thought of asking him to the Christmas tree," added Dickie's mother.

"He is a good, honest boy, a son to be proud of," said Mrs. Treherne. "And the squire means to help him onwards."

"He will be very grateful, ma'am. Dickie will never stop telling of how he picked up the little lady's doll, and all that came of it."

"Miss Olive says he came to the rescue of Mary Matilda like a knight of the olden days," said Mrs. Treherne with a smile. "She calls him 'Dickie the Dauntless'."

Long Complete Story

Esther's Hero

By E. EVERETT-GREEN

Author of "A Queen of Hearts," "The Wife of Arthur Lorraine," etc.

CHAPTER I

DANBY'S DAUGHTER

A CURLY head of a golden chestnut hue was thrust out of a window as the latch of the gate lifted.

"Daddy, how late you are!" spoke a clear, musical voice. "If I were not the most clever of cooks, your supper would be burnt to a cinder— Oh, I beg your pardon—"

The speaker, who had been leaning out from the little bow window of the small, suburban house—one of a long row of such buildings stretching far along a fairly wide and not entirely unlovely road—suddenly withdrew her head, and the light of laughing welcome died from her eyes, whilst her cheek suddenly grew pale.

Up the little garden walk a portly personage was advancing, and Esther Danby instantly recognised him. It was not the father whom she was expecting, but it was Mr. Murchison, her father's employer, whom she knew well by sight, having attended on several occasions the fêtes in his picturesque park, which from time to time he gave to all his employees, and to which Esther had accompanied her father.

But what in the world could be bringing Mr. Murchison to their doors at this hour of the late afternoon? Her heart thumped painfully, as with the presage of some coming trouble.

She was out in the little slip of garden before he had reached the steps.

"Oh, Mr. Murchison—my father is not here—has not come home yet. He is late. Did you want him?"

"May I come in a few minutes, m—my dear? I want a few words with you; but we will speak them indoors."

She led him into their little parlour. It

was a July evening, warm and fragrant. She had made the sparsely-furnished little place sweet with flowers. It wore an air of simple refinement which the rich man instantly felt. There was no attempt at cheap and flimsy decoration; all was plain, good of its kind, and suggestive of those "better days" to which so many of the toilers in great city houses can look back with a certain pathetic pride and fond reminiscence.

The girl with a striking face and head of curly chestnut hair installed her guest in an easy chair and stood before him with an unspoken question in her anxious eyes.

"Is your name Esther?" he asked; "and are you Danby's daughter?"

Her gesture gave assent to both these questions.

"Then I will ask you to put on your hat and a wrap, and to come back with me in the motor, which I left at the corner. Do not be too much alarmed, my dear; but your father had some kind of a seizure at his desk an hour ago. We had him taken into my room and a doctor was sent for. He had not fully recovered consciousness when I left; but he spoke a name several times—the name of Esther. The doctor thought that Esther had better be fetched. So I have come for you—"

"You do not mean that he is—dying?" The girl's voice was calm from her very bewilderment and suppressed anxiety and fear.

"Dying! Tut-tut-tut—whatever put such a notion as that into your head? Oh dear no! Dying! Bless my soul!—we city men are tougher than that! I'm afraid we have been overworking him these last few months. We have had great press of business in the office. Has he complained of it at home?"

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"Father never complains," answered Esther a little proudly, "and he is glad when things are brisk. I knew he had been busy; he has often been late home, and has brought work to finish afterwards. Sometimes he has worked half the night; but he has never seemed to mind. He says that he could almost do some of his work in his sleep—it is so much second nature to him."

Esther sped away to get ready. Mr. Murchison looked after her and then round the room with its evidences of simple refinement and traces of small means.

"Good man, Danby—thoroughly good man! Perhaps we have not valued him enough. Wonder what he has been having—must inquire into that. Roger is always telling me that some of the clerks ought to be raised. Roger is a bit of a crank, but a good lad. When he has wife and bairns of his own he will be ready to go slower—take things more quietly—look ahead farther. Little Sylvia will know how to make the money fly! Pretty little rogue that she is! Well, she has a tidy little fortune to play with, let alone what Roger will add to it! We must be talking of the wedding before long. There's Miss Esther's step again. Poor girl—I fear there is trouble ahead for her. We must do what we can—do what we can—Ah, my dear, here you are—prompt and quick, as the daughter of a city man should be. I left the motor at the corner of the road—quite a pretty place to live in. Do you have all the house?"

"Oh, no; we could not afford that. We took three unfurnished rooms. I keep them clean, and our landlady cooks for us—partly. I have a little oil-stove and do the rest. It is good for father to have a quiet place to come to, after the roar of the city all day. But it is rather expensive—for our means. Only I am very careful—and do all the marketing myself. Oh, is this your motor? What a wonderful thing! I never expected to know what it was like to go flying along like this. How wonderful it all is—these inventions! And now the flying-machines, too!"

To Esther it almost seemed as though they were flying already. Despite her anxiety on her father's account, she could not but enjoy that spin through the darkening July evening, into the great city whose myriad lamps were beginning to glint and glitter as they slowed up for the heavier traffic of the metropolis.

Mr. Murchison was very kind to her, pointing out this and that as they sped along; but her questions about her father he seemed unable to answer in any detail.

"The doctor will tell us when we get there," he would say. "I left my son Roger and the doctor with him. They will know better just what the matter is when we arrive."

"My son Roger!" Esther felt her heart give an odd little throb. Most girls have, locked away in the recesses of their hearts, some little romance with which some cavalier or knight is linked up. And in the case of Esther Danby it had been Roger Murchison who appealed to her vivid imagination as the embodiment of manly attractions and qualifications.

She had seen him first on the occasion of his coming of age, when all the employees of the great business house had been entertained at The Chase. And when, as evening drew on and some square dances on the lawn were got up to the strains of the military band, the hero of the occasion had singled out Esther and had danced one lancers with her, treating her with such deferential gallantry and courtesy, and making himself so delightful and entertaining that the memory of that episode had never been effaced from her mind.

She had been barely seventeen on that occasion; now she was twenty-two. But still the sound of Roger's name had power to flutter her pulses. And perhaps this was not wonderful. She had seen him since from time to time, and on every occasion he had seemed to her more splendid-looking, more knightly, more interesting than before. And all she heard of him tended to this girlish hero-worship. Her father spoke of him often. From the time that he left college he had interested himself in the great mercantile house of which his father was one of the heads. He did not immediately enter into the business, as he wished to travel in those lands with which their trade was most intimately connected. He had done this, and a small book published on his return giving a graphic and racy account of his adventures and experiences was amongst Esther's most treasured possessions. Two years ago he had settled down to harness. Esther's father had since then had much to say in praise of his kindness, consideration and championship of the weak or downtrodden. Since his coming larger sums had been given by the firm of Walton

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and Murchison to charitable objects; the office rooms had been better warmed and ventilated; the meagre salaries of the junior clerks had been raised; an extra few days of holiday had been granted to all the employees; and in cases of sickness greater liberality had been shown to those concerned. Esther knew without any particular telling that it was the influence of Roger Murchison which had effected this.

Now the car was slowing up in the narrow thoroughfare; now she was ascending, with a beating heart, the stairway to Mr. Murchison's first floor room. The great building was silent and empty now, and only when they reached this first floor did the sound of voices or the light through the half-open door give indication of human occupation. Mr. Murchison hustled in, speaking in cheery fashion.

"Well, Danby, I have brought your daughter—Miss Esther. Feeling better now? What say, Roger? Doctor gone?—Oh, coming back with some medicine, is he? Now, my dear, there is your father; and we must just settle amongst us what had better be done next for him. See if he can talk to you a little."

As Esther went forward, Roger Murchison, who had been sitting beside the prostrate figure on the leather-covered couch, rose, moved a little aside, and gave Esther a keen glance, holding out his hand as she advanced in friendly fashion.

"I am glad you have come so quickly," he said. "Your father has been asking for you whenever he has spoken."

Esther leaned over the man on the couch. His face was ashen in tint; his eyes half closed; his breath came slowly and audibly. His long, lean frame looked singularly powerless.

"Father—dear father. I am here. Do you not know me? I am your little Esther! Daday—Daddy!"

The last words came with a catch of the breath like a sob; and they seemed to penetrate the hearing of the patient.

"Esther!" he said rather thickly. "Esther!" And as she knelt beside him and held his hands in hers, she became convinced that the word "Esther" was the only one which his lips could now frame. Whatever she said to him—whatever she asked, she only received one word in response—her own name—"Esther."

She was aware of conversation, low-toned and earnest, going on in the room about her.

She was aware that a doctor came and administered to her father something to take, and a hypodermic injection also; but the patient's condition remained unchanged. She had moved a little aside herself, to give him room, and was standing with clasped hands and watchful, anxious eyes, when a voice at her side made her start, and looking up, she encountered the grave, compassionate and kindly gaze of Roger Murchison.

"We have sent for the ambulance; we have settled that Mr. Danby shall be taken straight to a small sanatorium in connection with our home farm. A nurse is always there, and you will of course accompany him. We use the place in case of accident or emergency in connection with our own tenants, or in the neighbourhood. But at this moment it is empty. The doctor will accompany your father in the ambulance. If you will allow me, I will motor you back to your home to fetch such things as you require for yourself and your father for a few weeks. Then we will follow the ambulance down, and shall very likely be there first. We have taken your consent for granted in all this; but I think it is the best arrangement to be made." Then Roger smiled, and Esther felt as though a ton weight had rolled off her heart.

CHAPTER II

A SPOILT DARLING

"WHERE'S Roger?" asked Sylvia, entering the drawing-room of Mr. Walton's luxurious house just on the stroke of eight.

"Darling, he cannot dine to-night; he has 'phoned from the office. Something has happened to hinder him; he will try to come to-morrow instead."

"I won't have him to-morrow! I told him to come to-day. Syd will be here tomorrow, with his new friend he thinks so much of. Roger said he would come, and I said I would keep this evening free for him. If he doesn't choose to keep his word—he may just stay away!"

Sylvia did not speak crossly; she was a sunny-tempered little mortal, but she took it for granted that her affairs were to take precedence of everything—that her lightest wish was to be law; and if any other person in her small world ignored this highly important fact—well, so much the worse for him! She pirouetted lightly round the big,

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dusky room as she spoke, and half waltzed across the hall to dinner in the wake of her parents, when that function was announced by the solemn butler.

Several rather important things had happened to Sylvia during the past two years. First she had come of age; almost immediately after that she had inherited rather a big fortune from an uncle who had made a great pet of her all her life; next she had become engaged to Roger Murchison, son of her father's partner, though Mr. Walton, after having piled up a large fortune for himself, had now retired from all active participation in the business.

Sylvia had known Roger all her life; they had been playmates in childhood, and she had lorded it over him all through his boyhood and youth. When he came back from his travels, a bronzed and rather splendid-looking man, changed somehow from the Roger of the past, Sylvia went through a curious experience, for she fell in love with him! She had been playing and toying with love all her life more or less, and had had little "affairs of the heart" from her nursery days onwards; but this, she decided, was quite, quite different; and she must needs confide her secret to her mother. Both Mr. Walton and his wife were delighted. It was what they had always desired for their darling. Mr. Murchison was approached; he approved with equal enthusiasm. Sylvia's bright eyes beamed welcome at Roger's approach. They were thrown constantly together; Sylvia wore her girlish heart upon her sleeve. Roger had come home with his enthusiasm for England and English girls quickened by residence in strange foreign lands. The fateful words were spoken; the betrothal party had been a grand function. It had been one of those occasions where Esther Danby had visited The Chase, for both houses—the properties adjoining—were *en fête*. Nothing could have seemed more appropriate. The parents were delighted, Sylvia was radiant, whilst Roger's grave, manly face beamed with pride and contentment.

A year ago all that had happened. The mother had pleaded for a year's engagement. She did not want her darling's girlhood too quickly curtailed. Sylvia found it charming to be engaged. Roger brought her presents every week. She had him at her beck and call. She, too, decided not to cut short this pleasant time of wooing. It was supposed that the wedding would take

place soon now, in the summer or early autumn; but the date had not been fixed; both parties seemed content with matters as they were.

The only thing which annoyed Sylvia was that Roger let business, the office, those foolish, unpleasant matters which he called "his duties" interfere with her arrangements and her claims upon his time! This was the kind of thing which she resented—only that word seems too hard a one to employ in connection with anyone so kittenish and frolicsome as Sylvia. Still, kittens have sharp little claws, and Sylvia occasionally used hers. Roger must be kept in order, must be made to understand that her word was law. Just because Sylvia had a tiny inkling that it was rather she who had wooed Roger, than Roger making choice of her, she was wont to demand rather more homage than she might otherwise have done.

"Darling, men have claims upon their time which we do not altogether understand," her mother sometimes told her. But Sylvia would laugh and shake her head with pretty wilfulness.

"Roger must learn to give me what he promises—or I shall punish him." And he was to be punished this time by being denied another evening with his Sylvia, in lieu of the one arranged.

Just as the Waltons were crossing the hall again back to the drawing-room the hoot and panting of a motor-car made itself heard without, and Sylvia's face beamed mischievously.

"Mother, he's come after all! He was afraid not to!"

The white-robed fairy danced gleefully to the great doors which the butler was opening. She darted out upon the steps—a charming vision with the strong electric light behind her, and her gay, lilting voice rang out mirthfully:

"So you have come after all—bad boy, to be so late for dinner! Oh, Syd, is it you? I thought it was Roger."

"Well, can you put up with the substitution? Found I could get off a day earlier; but we weren't sure we'd get here to-night, so we didn't wire. Let me introduce my friend Annesley. You know all about him from my letters."

Sylvia's bright eyes fastened upon the very tall figure leisurely descending from the car. At the first glance she decided that her brother's friend was very interesting



"Looking up, she encountered the grave, compassionate and kindly gaze of Roger Murchison."—p. 203.

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in appearance; that he was remarkably handsome, with a yellow, drooping moustache like all her favourite heroes—Roger was perfectly clean shaved—and that he had an air of leisured elegance and indolence about him which she summed up in a word dear to her heart, though not often used in her vocabulary—"aristocratic."

She held out her hand with a very charming smile.

"My brother has told us so much about you, Sir Lawrence, that we seem to know you already!"

"That's all right then," he answered in a pleasant, rather languid voice. "So fatiguing making acquaintances—much better to take for granted that it's made already. 'Sydney's sister,' even if she's not 'Pembroke's mother,' ought to be a familiar personage." Then he stopped and laughed out suddenly, for he saw that Sylvia had not a notion what he was talking about, and her wide gaze of questioning astonishment entertained him not a little.

Sydney was grinning with infinite entertainment.

"Come along, Sis, and give us the news whilst we get something to eat. Hallo, Dad—that you? Yes, here we are, a day before time. My friend Annesley—we're touring round in his car. Perhaps if you asked us anxiously we'd put in a few days here, just for him to see the sights of the neighbourhood."

Sylvia's eyes were shining vividly. She was much attached to her brother, and this new friend of his was extraordinarily attractive. She followed them into the dining-room, where servants were bringing in a hastily prepared supper. She sat with her pretty white elbows on the table, her piquant face resting against her clasped hands, eagerly following the story of their adventures, and putting in her own little saucy remarks and criticisms as the tale proceeded.

Although Sylvia looked almost entirely at her brother, who was the chief speaker, she was very conscious of the steady gaze of a pair of dark grey eyes, half veiled by heavy lids, that were frequently fixed upon her animated face. She knew that the electric burners lit up the gold of her hair, showed up the delicate texture of her flawless skin, scintillated upon the silvery fabric of her Paris dress, and emphasised the delicate curves of her neck and throat. Little Sylvia was very much alive to her

own girlish charms. She admired them herself in a quite innocent fashion, as her somewhat injudicious training had taught her to do from childhood. She wanted to be admired; it amused and delighted her. And this Sir Lawrence Annesley, holding some post in the diplomatic service, was a very splendid sort of personage. She must make the most of him during the few days of his visit. Then, if they made him enjoy himself, he might perhaps come again. Sir Lawrence—she liked the sound of that title. His wife, when he married, would be Lady Annesley. How pretty that name would sound! How much prettier than—Mrs. Murchison, for instance. Was he married? she wondered. Hardly likely, she thought. Syd said he had a fine estate, but could not live there, not being rich enough. What a pity! And she was so rich now—and would be richer some day. She was smiling blithely at her brother's recital of their adventures during a breakdown; but her mind was busy with her own train of thought.

The dark grey eyes were watching her. She looked at Sir Lawrence, and found herself smiling and then blushing charmingly. Sylvia knew she looked pretty when she blushed, though it was a silly trick that she disliked in herself. She got up quickly, and Sir Lawrence lifted his long person out of the seat and came over to her by the open window.

"I am sure you have a lovely place here," he said. "I wonder if you ever get up early, whilst the dew is on the grass—you look as though you did, for there is the light of dawn in your eyes—it has not faded yet." Now Sylvia was a lazy little person, who liked morning tea or chocolate in a nest of soft pillows, and a leisurely toilet before a late breakfast. But also she liked Sir Lawrence to see reflections of the dawn in her eyes, and she felt sure if she were out early in the garden that he would join her there. So she laughed without entirely committing herself, knowing that he would take this as a tryst; and sure enough, when she tripped out across the dew-whitened grass next morning—a dainty vision in white and pale green, bare-headed, with the glory of the early sunshine making a halo round her golden head, Sir Lawrence was by the old fountain, watching the goldfish sailing round and round; and she felt the quick flush and thrill which ran through her pulses as he rose and came forward, with a quotation about Aurora on his lips.

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"Ah, but you are so clever—and I am so ignorant!" quoth pretty Sylvia with a laugh on her lips and a charming appeal in her eyes. "They spoiled me so dreadfully. I was always running away from my lessons—out into the garden—"

"Which shows a fine discrimination—better than what any book-learning can give. Protect me from the learned woman! Give me youth—glorious, golden youth, with the dew and the dawn, and all glad and happy things compounded in its essence!"

And if Sylvia did not entirely understand his words, at least she understood that he meant them as appreciative of herself; and her walk with him through the garden alleys, with the golden glory of the morning about them, was an experience which was to her something new, wonderful, bewildering.

He did not talk very much; but he plied her with questions, looking down at her from his great height, and drawing her out by degrees to speak to him freely and candidly of herself, her life and her aspirations.

"And some day soon you are to marry your childhood's playmate—is it not so? Sydney told me something of that."

Sylvia gave him a quick upward glance. Was it only his fancy, or had some of the sunshine gone out of her eyes?

"Let us go in," said Sylvia, without making direct reply. "It must be nearly breakfast time. Aren't you starving?"

They went in together. The sunny dining-room looked inviting with its well-spread table and sideboard. Sylvia greeted her parents and went to look over her letters. On the top of the pile lay one from Roger. With a movement of impatience she flung it aside unopened, a little perplexed frown on her face.

CHAPTER III

A HOME OF REST

ESTHER came out into the fragrant garden just as the sun began to set, and upon her face was a brightness that had suffered eclipse for many days; for this afternoon the doctor had pronounced her father out of danger; and although recovery might be slow, it was practically assured.

As the girl came slowly down the path between two lines of tall flowers rioting in the great herbaceous borders, as flowers cared and tended will do towards summer's

maturity and wane, she took in for the first time the impression of the glory and beauty of their sweetness and glow, the radiance of the evening sky, the quaint charm of the thatched bungalow house which had been for ten days her home, the pastoral peacefulness of the country about her, with the old-fashioned farmery lying in the little dip behind, and the golden cornfields and green pasture lands climbing up the side of the wooded range beyond.

Anxiety and haunting fear had kept her closely within doors all this while; but now, with her father sleeping calmly, all the weary pain in his head soothed, and some indications of power returning to his helpless limbs, she had let the kindly nurse hunt her out into the garden, and had promised not to enter the house again for at least an hour.

A firm footfall sounded upon the road behind the hedge, the latch of the gate clicked. Esther's face brightened to a look of eager recognition—eager gratitude. Next minute she and Roger Murchison were cordially shaking hands.

"I've just met Dr. Mayhew and heard the good news. He says that you will want looking after next—"

"Ah, that is his nonsense. I am perfectly well. Now that my father has taken a turn—well, you will see! I am just taking stock of this charming place. I could not think about anything before. Did you have it built for sick people to use as a sort of home of rest? I never knew anything more delightful and perfect than all the arrangements."

"I am so glad to hear you say so. Yes, it was my fancy, and I planned it, and rather fancy myself for my ideas! You see, on my travels I was violently ill once in an outlandish eastern place. Some Arabs tended me and pulled me round. As I lay ill I had a lot of thoughts and ideas. When I got home I felt that my 'thank offering' should take a form which might benefit other sick folk, and I built that little bungalow near the farm. One of the farmer's sons had died, leaving a young widow, who had a turn for nursing—as I dare say she has told you. She lives with the farm people when the bungalow is empty, and takes care of any invalid who comes. She had her training whilst the place was building; and so far it has worked well."

He took her into the orchard and little

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nut copse. They talked of many things together, and presently he asked a question.

"Has Syl—I mean Miss Walton been to see you yet?"

Esther gave him a quick glance of understanding. She and the nurse had talked sometimes of dainty Sylvia, the betrothed of Roger Murchison; but Esther had not seen her, save upon the day of the festivities in the two parks a year ago. She shook her head at Roger's question.

"That is strange. I wrote to ask her to do so directly you came here. It would have done you good to see another girl."

"Ah, but Nurse says her brother is at home, and a visitor with him. They have been motoring about all together. And, indeed, if anybody had been kind enough to come, I should scarcely have had time to see them. If ever I can leave my father I ought to go to our London rooms and see if I can arrange something. Mr. Murchison, please may I talk business with you? I am beginning to feel troubled and bewildered. My father will not be fit for work for quite a longish time, I can see, by what the doctor says—"

"I am afraid this is so; but you are not to worry on that account. Your father is owed quite a long holiday, for he has had the minimum of days off, all these years, of any person in the office, and has done more overtime work than anybody else—for nothing. My father and I have talked things over. I am glad you have spoken and given me the chance to explain our ideas. We wish you to remain here for several months—say till Christmas—and during that time this little bungalow cottage home will be yours. Your father will draw his salary as usual, and when he is better we will ask him to help with such of the book work as can be done away from the office, and a good deal of the foreign correspondence also can be done here, when he is convalescent. This will be a great help, and we shall get a temporary accountant in his place in our business house. But the place will be kept open for him."

Esther turned away her eager golden-brown eyes, lest he should see the springing tears of gratitude and relief.

"How good you are—how kind! I don't know how to say what I feel about it all. I don't think I shall try."

"No, don't. There is nothing to enthuse over." Roger's smile was half whimsical and wholly delightful. "It's just a little

arrangement to the mutual advantage of all parties concerned. And I took the liberty of running over to your rooms in Birch Road and interviewing your landlady; and she tells me she can get quiet lodgers to take your rooms furnished, if you like to let them, and she will pay herself what is right out of the proceeds, and hand on the balance to you. I'll motor you up the first day you can spare the time from your father, and you can make your arrangements and bring away your small effects."

"You think of everything!" cried Esther with shining eyes. "It seems to take away the load and the burden from our lives!"

He laughed in that almost boyish way of his which the girl found so attractive. He begged a cup of tea presently, and the nurse, beaming and delighted—for she adored Roger, as did all the tenants on the property—set out the little table in the garden under a weeping birch tree. Esther poured it out, and Roger did ample justice to the excellent farmhouse fare; for the farmer's wife did all the catering for the residents of the bungalow, and Esther had already discovered that there were no weekly settling days afterwards. She had been too much preoccupied to think of these things at first; but as they sat at tea together, she tried to get Roger to fix some sum which they should be permitted to pay. But he only made whimsical, joking answers, and it was impossible to keep a grave aspect or business-like air in face of his determinedly boyish inconsequence.

"I shall set my father at you one of these days," she told him as she wiped the tears of mirth from her eyes. "He is a man of business; you will not be able to treat him with this levity and irresponsibility."

"Well let it be a bargain then," he answered. "You leave me and your father to settle everything between us. Business is for men, not women; though it's getting to be heresy in these days to say as much!"

"We poor women have perforce to learn how to be businesslike," said Esther with a smile and a sigh. "But I think most of us would be very glad if we could leave that sort of thing alone."

When Roger took his departure, leaving a glow of sunshine behind him, he did not take the direct way home, but cut diagonally across the home park, and crossing the dividing road, entered the adjoining estate of the Waltons, and made a bee-line for their house.

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It was nearly a fortnight since he had seen Sylvia—an unprecedented occurrence during their betrothal. Mr. Danby's sudden illness had thrown extra pressure on the office, and Sylvia kept putting him off in the evenings. She would be out all day—and too tired for his visit, or she was dining out, or going to a dance. Roger had not been sorry for the extra time for work; but he felt as though something had gone just a little agog in his life, and was eager to have Sylvia clinging to his arm again, and outpouring her little histories into his ears.

Sydney, he knew, had gone off yesterday. Sylvia would be feeling rather dull, perhaps; she was such an affectionate, dependent little creature, though not without her "moods and tenses" and whims and fancies which he found both entertaining and attractive. He quickened his steps as he gained the gardens; he knew Sylvia's haunts and habits, and soon he sighted the slim, white-clad figure seated on the edge of the fountain, gazing down into the water with unwanted gravity and absorption of mien.

Roger had not for nothing stalked wild game in the jungle. He stepped up noiselessly, and laid two strong hands upon Sylvia's shoulders. The girl sprang up and faced round. There was a dazzling light in her eyes as she first flashed them upon him; but almost immediately that light went out, and she exclaimed quite pettishly:

"Roger!—how you startled me! I hate to be startled!"

The lover was puzzled. That first glimpse he had caught of her face as she flew round did not seem as though she had disliked being taken unawares. Perhaps the little puss was playing with him, teasing him. She was not going to let him see how delighted she really was. She was a lady of moods and must be humoured.

He sat down on the edge of the fountain and tried to draw her towards him; but she stood up stiff and straight, looking down at the fish, and just resisting the gentle pressure of his arm.

"It's a long while since I saw you, Sylvie; it seems an age."

"Doesn't it? Almost time to forget there is such a person."

"You wouldn't let me come, sweetheart. What were you doing with yourself all those days?"

"Taking Sydney round, and giving him a good time. He brought that new friend of his—Sir Lawrence Annesley, you know. He

wanted to show him the country, so we went motoring, and people asked us about a good bit. It seems dull now they've gone. But Syd will bring him back for the shooting—that's settled."

Her voice changed audibly as she spoke the latter words. A brighter ring seemed to come into it. Roger glanced at her from under level brows. An expression which he scarcely knew how to interpret was playing fitfully over the downbent face. Her eyes were veiled by their long lashes.

Roger rose to his feet. Sylvia turned from the fountain, and both paced towards the house as by mutual consent.

"You did not go to see Esther Danby, dear?"

"Never heard of such a person in my life."

"Why, Sylvie, I wrote you a letter last Thursday week, the day I could not come to dine because poor Danby had had a seizure; and we had to get his daughter and take him down to the bungalow that same night. I wrote and explained all that, and asked you to go and see the girl. I think you would like her——"

"A clerk's daughter!" with just a touch of disdain.

"Don't, Sylvia. Miss Danby is a lady. Your father and mine might have been in Danby's shoes if fortune had not smiled somewhat unexpectedly upon their respective fathers."

Sylvia was smitten with a little grace of compunction.

"Of course, I'll go and see her, Roger. I don't mean to be nasty; only it seems so flat and dull with Sydney gone."

"And with only me to try and fill his place!"

She made a tiny little grimace at him; but her vapours were evaporating, and she let him take her hand and hold it.

"Oh, you, you old goose; of course, there is always you! But you must make yourself very amusing and agreeable if you want to take the place of Sydney and Sir Lawrence Annesley!"

CHAPTER IV

FRIENDSHIP

THE girls stood looking one at the other. They had met in the garden; for Esther was known to be there when Sylvia had asked for her, and as the latter had come

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with the determination to be "nice," and not to stand on ceremony, she had pursued her hostess into the orchard, from which a second garden was reached; and Esther, seeing and instantly recognising the slender, flitting figure, whose advent she had been half expecting, met her at the wicket gate.

"How kind of you to come; you are Miss Walton?"

"How did you know—did Roger tell you I was coming?"

miration at her dainty guest. "And you must know, I am sure, how pretty you are; so that I shall not corrupt you by adding my tribute."

Sylvia swept her a fine court curtsy, and then linked her arm in Esther's and walked with her down the long, straight path.

"This is the old herb garden, I suppose, that Roger talks about. He has such a lot of theories; I can't keep pace with them.



"She sat with her pretty white elbows on the table . . . eagerly following the story of their adventures"—p. 206.

"I should have known you without that. I saw you last summer. I was at the big fête. I thought I had never seen anything so pretty or fairylike."

"As me or the fête?" asked Sylvia, laughing.

"Both!" answered Esther with such promptitude and sincerity that Sylvia's gay laugh rang spontaneously forth, and Esther must needs join in. "But it's quite true," she added, with a glance of unveiled ad-

He thinks we don't use herbs enough now; and he's growing them here to try what he can do to make people as wise as they used to be in the dark ages! I expect he'll be making love-potions and finding the elixir of life one of these days! Does he talk to you about his wonderful ideas?"

"Yes; aren't they wonderful? Isn't he wonderful? He is always thinking how to do kindnesses for other people, and to make them happy! Just think what I owe him!"

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I scarcely know how to speak of it. Most employers would have sent my father to a hospital if he had been taken ill, or perhaps put him in a cab and sent him home to me. Ah, perhaps you do not understand just what that means when people are poor. But I know! Now, instead of worry and anxiety and everything against him, here we both are in this sweet place, without an anxiety of any kind! Oh, I want to thank somebody for it all; and Mr. Roger Murchison will never let me say one-quarter what I want! I shall have to try and thank you instead! Won't it be almost the same?"

Esther's golden-brown eyes flashed a meaning look into Sylvia's piquant, charming face. The girl instantly understood her meaning, answering it by one of her attractive little *moues*.

"Oh, Roger and I are not married yet! Don't please make the mistake of thinking of us as *one*! It's rather an appalling idea even afterwards, don't you think? Before-hand it doesn't apply in the least, I assure you!"

They laughed together; but Esther could not refrain from saying softly as they wandered through the fragrant herb garden:

"It must be such a beautiful thing to have the great and first love of such a big, noble heart! I do like to think how happy you will be with him—and he with you!"

Sylvia laughed afresh, a little silvery peal, and pressed Esther's arm in sportive fashion.

"You dear old-fashioned thing! I do like to hear you talk! What a joy you must be to Roger! I'm sure you and he would agree beautifully! I'm much too frivolous! I don't half appreciate the glory and beauty of his best ideas."

Esther smilingly shook her head. Sylvia's little airs entertained and delighted her, because she was so pretty to look at, and her small affectations of indifference to her lover seemed so innocently child-like.

"Do give me some tea!" cried Sylvia inconsequently after they had had a little more talk together. "I know Roger has tea here in the garden sometimes. Give it to me, too, please; and if Roger drops in he can take me home afterwards. I'm sure he thinks a lot of you, Miss Danby. He has told me what a good daughter you are! He would like me to take a leaf out of your book, I am sure. I don't fuss over my parents; I expect them to fuss over me!"

That's the way we arrange things nowadays in the world. We young ones must have our good time, whatever happens to anybody else!"

Esther was delighted to keep her pretty guest, and to bring out the best that the house contained. Sylvia lay back in a long, cushioned chair, watching Esther go to and fro, and make and dispense the fragrant tea, content to look on, her white hands clasped behind her pretty, ruffled golden head, her blue eyes dancing with the sheer joy of life.

"I mean to call you Esther," she suddenly announced, as she held out her cup for a refill; "and you are to call me Sylvia. I haven't got many girl friends here—heaps in London; but I'm not sure that we are going up this autumn. I had a lovely time of it in the spring. I was presented; and my dress was in all the papers, and my photograph in quite a goodish few. I was called 'one of the most attractive' of the debutantes. It was my first really proper season. Last year mother was ill, and the year before I just went about a little—I was coming out; but I had not properly come! This year I had a splendid time of it! I wish we were going up again. Of course, the autumn is never like the real season. Still, there is a good bit of fun going on!"

"But," said Esther, as she slowly stirred her tea, looking down into her cup the while, "I suppose your wedding would rather interfere with an autumn season for you."

"My wedding?" Sylvia's voice had a tiny edge upon it.

"The people at the farm told me that they thought Mr. Roger (as they call him) was going to be married soon—some time this year, anyhow."

Sylvia suddenly jumped up. Her face was slightly flushed, as a girl's might well be whose approaching marriage has been spoken of; and in her eyes there was a vivid shining, which somehow did not quite look like the shining of a triumphant happiness, though Esther thought that surely it must be this as Sylvia fled down the pathway towards the gate.

"I'm sure I hear Roger coming!" she cried gaily. "Get the dear boy a cup, Esther! No wonder he likes to drop in here to tea! You have the most delightful cream and cakes in the world!"

By the time that Esther had tripped into the house for more hot cakes and another

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cup, Roger and Sylvia were coming up the path together; she was hanging to his arm, and he was looking down at the charming child face, with a pleasant gleam in his eyes.

"I like your Esther immensely, Roger," Sylvia declared as they came up, and he tendered his hand. "I don't always care about Roger's paragons, Esther; so you may take it as a compliment if you choose, that I am going to like you!"

They were merry together over their tea. Sylvia's little airs of proprietorship where Roger was concerned were pretty and entertaining, though when Roger talked she seemed to prefer amusing herself with the cats and the dogs, and leaving Esther to answer him and interest herself in the subject matter.

"I shall often come and see you now," she declared as Roger led her away at length. "I think it will be delightful having a friend so near; and when you have time you must come and see me. I'll show you my rooms and all my pretty things. Sometimes I want to make a clean sweep of them all, so that I can have a new lot in! I do love presents and unexpected parcels arriving. Esther, dear—suppose you get married soon! I'd send you such a splendid lot of things from my stores; and then I could have fresh ones myself. Roger, isn't that a good idea?"

"I don't know what Miss Danby will think of all the nonsense you talk, pussycat!" quoth Roger, laughing, and he cast a glance at Esther of mutual understanding and good-fellowship, which brought a flush of pleasure to her face.

She watched the pair out of sight; she saw Sylvia turn her charming face up towards his, and Roger bend down over her in what seemed truly lover-like fashion. And as she watched, it came over her what a good and goodly thing was the strong, protective love of such a man as this. All her life so far she had had to watch over, care, and work for others—a fragile mother first, then a father, often tired and worn, always dependent upon her for his home comforts. The tasks had been dear to her, and she had never wearied of fulfilling them; but suddenly she let herself dream of what life would be like, cherished, protected, guarded—as the life of pretty Sylvia. And she thought it must be very good—very sweet and wholly desirable. Half unconsciously she wondered whether

such protective help would ever come her way.

As the days went by she found that Sylvia was as good as her word. She came often to the bungalow. She brought flowers, fruit, and books for the invalid, and would chat with Mr. Danby for ten minutes or so in the pleasant parlour where he lay; so that he came to regard her visits as little bits of sunshine in his quiet and restful, but somewhat monotonous, days. With Esther she would wander about the garden and field; or walk her new friend off across the park to her own home. She was generally gay; but sometimes fitful in her moods. Esther learned in time that she could be wayward and capricious, though there was a dainty grace about her little tempers that gave them a charm of their own.

Now and then Sylvia seemed restless and almost depressed, which mood was often followed by one of almost wild hilarity. Esther's more tranquil spirit was occasionally disturbed by a sudden outbreak that she could not comprehend or interpret. And presently she came to know that Roger was puzzled, too; for on one of his frequent visits to her father and herself, he took the opportunity of speaking to her alone, as she walked the herb garden with him in search of a plant that he wanted for an experiment.

"I wish you would tell me what you think of Sylvia, now that you have learned to know her. . . . I mean is she happy? Happy in the present—and in the thought of the future? Does she ever talk of that future—her married life—with you? Is it wrong for me to ask?"

"No, no; but I cannot give you any answer. Sylvia only talks of the past and the present—or of some possible London gaieties next season—"

"After her marriage, do you mean?"

"It does not sound as though she did mean that. When I ask her she just laughs and turns the subject."

"Just what I have found. It used not to be so with her. We used always to be making plans about what we would do. Now I cannot get her to seem interested in anything. She laughs and makes fun of my words, or turns away from the subject altogether." There was a pause of silence, and then he added: "I have been wondering whether that is the way with girls—when the time is coming nearer. Do you think it is so, Miss Danby? I have no

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mother or sister to help me to be wise with my little Sylvia, so I come to you."

Esther's heart gave a glad throb at these words. Her eyes showed gladness, too. It was very sweet that he should so come to her for aid.

"If only I could help you better, but I know so few girls; and Sylvia is like something unique and apart—a sort of fairy creature, with ways all her own."

"Is she not?" he said, his face lighting. "That is how I feel about her—as though a great, clumsy fellow like myself could not be expected to understand her. That is why I have come to you."

"I'm afraid I do not understand Sylvia either," said Esther slowly; then noting the half look of disappointment on his face she added: "But I will try to—if I can!"

CHAPTER V

LOVE!

DARLING, I do not see how we can make plans like that. We shall have to go to town, of course, to see about the trousseau. But we shall be too busy for a long stay or a lot of gaiety. Perhaps after you are married Roger will take you a town house."

Sylvia pouted, and raised one shoulder almost up to her ear—a childish trick she had never outgrown.

"I don't want to wait for that. I want a lovely time soon. Syd is coming almost directly for the shooting. And after we have had our October house parties, I want to go to London again and have a lot of dancing and fun."

"But, my darling—your wedding!"

"Mummy, my wedding can wait. I want my fun first. You were so sweet and sensible not to let me get married straight off last year, when Roger and I both wanted it! Don't go and spoil it all now by hurrying me into it before I am ready!"

"My precious child! That is the last thing I want. But it was to be a year's engagement, and the year has been over some little time now. What will Roger say if we postpone it longer?"

"I think it's more for me to settle than Roger," said Sylvia. "I don't see why I should have my fun cut short, and turn into a frumpy old married woman before I'm ready!"

"Darling, you will be a lovely bride, and then a charming *young* married woman."

"I don't believe any wife of Roger's can help turning into a sort of a kind of a frump!" persisted Sylvia.

Her mother eyed her darling a little anxiously. This match had been highly approved by herself and her husband alike. Roger was so perfectly fit to be entrusted with the life of their darling child. He would make a pattern husband; he had every qualification that a little, feather-brained creature like their Sylvia needed to keep her life balanced, happy, and controlled. They had been delighted by the engagement a year ago, and the girl had been radiantly happy. They had hoped to see her Roger's wife this year, but Sylvia seemed disinclined. Surely that was something new!

"My dear child, I don't think you can quite mean what you say. However, it is for you to settle with Roger the date of your marriage. We do not wish to hurry you; but you must remember the understanding that it was to be this year—and now that September is waning—"

Mrs. Walton stopped short, for Sylvia had fled. The glow of summer was not altogether past, and one long window stood open to the sunshine without. The girl fled through it into the garden, down the terrace steps, and on into the shrubberies beyond, where she was safe from prying eyes, and could feel herself alone.

There was a quite strange expression upon her face. The inconsequent kittenish youth had gone out of it. Her eyes gleamed almost fiercely, and her breath came in deep, panting gasps.

She flung herself, with a gesture of something akin to despair, down upon a seat in a deep yew arbour. She pulled out from some secret receptacle a silken-tied packet, which she unfastened. Sundry papers fell out—the photograph of a handsome man, with long, sleepy-looking eyes, straight and handsome features, the mouth veiled by a long, drooping moustache. There was a letter also, not long, but showing how it had been read and re-read; and three sets of verses—a sonnet, a lyric, a limerick! And as Sylvia took these up one after the other, touching them tenderly, glancing from one to the other, caressing them, as it were, with her hands, the tears gathered slowly in her eyes, and all in a moment she was lost in the tempest of her own weeping.

"Little Sylvia—whatever is the matter?"

She leaped to her feet; the papers fell

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fluttering to earth; the tall man who had invaded her solitude stooped to gather them up. But he gathered more than the papers! She was seeking vainly to recover herself—to choke back her tears—to find words of greeting, explanation, excuse; but no words were needed. A pair of long, strong arms gathered her up close. She could not resist; she did not try. The flood of her tears was suddenly dried at their source. A rapture pervaded all her being. She felt the kiss of love upon her lips.

"Oh, Lawrence!" she faintly breathed. "Oh, Lawrence!"

"Sylvia, my little silver queen, what were all those silvery tears falling for? Were you weeping for—your lover?"

"Oh, Lawrence—what do you mean?"

"Sylvia, you know what I mean!" As he spoke he held up the papers he had gathered together, and her face flushed rosy as she took them from him. Then he showed her certain papers, which he, too, carried always with him, and the flush deepened and the light glowed in her eyes.

"But, Lawrence . . . it is all so wrong. . . . You know that I am . . . engaged."

She looked at the sparkling ring upon her hand, and his glance followed hers.

"That will have to be changed, Sylvia," he said quietly, but with a certain finality in his low, even tones. "We thought so before, you and I. Now we know it."

She was quivering from head to foot with conflicting emotions. He would have put his arm about her afresh, but she drew back.

"Don't, Lawrence—don't! You must not—till I am free. No, no; I mean what I say. I won't tell a lie. You know that I love you."

"My darling, say it again! It is so sweet to hear! I love you, and love you, and love you! I have dared to say it in veiled words already; now I say it openly. You were weeping for love—for your lover; deny it if you dare! And that lover was not—and never can be now—the worthy Roger Murchison!"

She flashed him a swift glance. How handsome he was—so tall, so romantic-looking, so masterful! An ideal lover! Her whole heart cried out for him; yet she looked gravely into his eyes and said:

"I do not think you are so good a man as Roger."

"I am sure I am not. You will have to teach me how to become as good. The

reformation of man is the vocation of woman."

Her face began to dimple afresh. The glamour of a love different from her girlish admiration and adoration for Roger—which had not stood the test of time—was sweeping her from the old moorings. Yet she tried hard not to be swept altogether away. She held her lover off, her hands against his shoulders.

"Lawrence, you must not make me wicked. I must not promise you anything; I must try not even to give it you—till I have told the truth to Roger and the rest. I must break my engagement. You would not have me deceitful."

"By no means. Break it at once—to-day!"

"Oh, Lawrence, I can't. It will be harder than you think. They are all so set on it—my parents, his father, Roger himself. It will be rather dreadful. I can't do it all in a moment. Lawrence, when are you coming here—to stay?"

"In a fortnight perhaps—when Sydney gets some days for pheasants. I shall be here in mid October, sweetheart!"

"Then, Lawrence, I will begin to pave the way; indeed, I almost think I have begun already. And when you are here, to give me courage, then I will try—yes, then I shall be brave enough—I'm sure I shall—to break away altogether."

He tried to take her into his embrace again, but still she held him off. Some deep-down sense of honour strove with her girlish longing for her lover's kiss, and strove successfully. Strangely enough, Esther's eyes, with their candid sweetness and courage, seemed to be looking out at her. Sylvia felt a little thrill run through her. What would Esther say when she heard? What would Esther do in like case? Would Esther ever marry a man she had ceased to love—after the right fashion? And if she knew that she must not, how would she act towards him?

"Esther will help me!"—that was the thought which leaped into her mind and gave her courage. With her hands still pressed against the tall man's shoulders, she looked into his face with a new purpose and sweetness in hers.

"Not yet, Lawrence; not yet. I don't take back my words. That would be foolish and futile. You know I love you. I know you love me. That makes me very proud and happy. But it must be enough

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for us—just for a week or two. I am not very brave; but I am going to be brave now. Only you must give me a little time. We shall have such a lot of time to grow tired of each other afterwards!"

"My silver queen—my darling!"

She could not have acted more wisely had she been a very diplomatic instead of a very impulsive and inexperienced little person. The love of Lawrence Annesley had been kindled hotly by her girlish beauty and charm; his reason had told him that her big fortune would make life for him an altogether different affair. Now he was finding that beneath the fairy-like child-charm of his little love there was a firmness of purpose and a sense of honour which, truth to tell, he had not expected in her.

So his response to her words was to take her hands and carry them to his lips, whilst in his heart he felt for her a dawning homage which it had not occurred to him to offer before. He had regarded her hitherto in the light of a charming plaything—play-fellow even; but scarcely as a helpmeet in any of the problems or battles of life.

"Then I will go now, sweetheart; but in a few weeks I shall come again—for another sort of answer. Will my Sylvia have it ready for me by then?"

Her face was all one lovely glow of tenderness and joy. It was hard for them to part thus, but her will held firm. She clung to the idea that Esther was watching her; for she knew that to Esther she must first tell her tale, and she resolved that she would tell it truthfully. Therefore she must not be ashamed of the things which she must say. She let her lover go with no more than the touch of his lips upon her hand; and so soon as he was gone she turned and fled, seeking the shelter of her own rooms, there to still the tumult of her mind, and muse upon the wonderful thing which had befallen her.

CHAPTER VI

A HARD TASK

THE words had been spoken—the tale had been told. Sylvia, thrown back amongst her soft cushions of satin and down, was panting a little in her excitement. Esther, in her deep chair beside the piled-up fire of Sylvia's scented boudoir, sat forward, with closely clasped hands, her grave, clear eyes fastened upon the changing face of the

younger girl, an immeasurable astonishment and dismay looking out from the golden-brown eyes.

"Sylvia, do you really, really mean it?"

"Is it likely I should say it if I didn't? Do you think it is easy to tell it to anybody?"

"Have you told nobody but me?"

"I have told you first. Oh, Esther—don't look at me like that! You know when I wrote to you, you promised you would be my friend, and would help me. And I said to myself, 'Esther will never break her word!' I trusted you so!"

"Dear Sylvia, I want to help you if I can. But your mind is made up already. You have decided for yourself."

"Yes, yes, yes; it isn't that I want you to *decide* for me. Can't you guess what it is?"

Esther shook her head; she began to feel bewildered.

"I want you—to tell Roger!"

"Sylvia!"

"I do. Esther, you must! I simply daren't—I can't. I have been trying for a whole week—and it can't be done. You have got to do it for me! That is what I want your help for."

"But, Sylvia—your mother—"

"I can't tell her—not till Roger knows. Roger will have to tell them. We'll tell them together then. I don't love Roger in the right way. . . . I've found that out. But he will stand by me and help me. He won't want me when I don't want him. That will be all right. But till he knows I simply daren't say a word. They have been so bent on it. They were so frightfully pleased last year when we were engaged. Oh, why was I such a little goose—?"

"As to love Mr. Roger Murchison? Sylvia, *that* was not foolish, whatever else may have been."

"Ah, but don't you understand? It was not proper love! I was very silly and romantic. Roger had been away, and came back a sort of hero. Everybody wanted it—I suppose I felt the pressure of other minds, and girls love the éclat of being engaged! I enjoyed it for a time; but I have known Roger always. When we got used again to each other there was no romance about it. And we are not interested in the same things. I get so bored when he talks about his ideas! Mine are quite, quite different! If he doesn't know it (men are so dense), I

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do. I should disappoint him horribly. He would hate it worse than I, for I should have my distractions! I have a heap of money of my own, and should have a good time my own way."

"Don't, Sylvia!"

"There, you see! When I talk of what it would be if I were not wise enough to break it off, you are shocked at once! But that isn't really a bit the worst of it. The real thing is knowing that I have made a mistake, and care more for somebody else. Esther, you *must* understand that I could not—"

"Yes, yes—I do, I do! Only, why do you want to bring me into it? It is no affair of mine!"

"Well, but you are my friend; and it's you who have talked to me about bearing one another's burdens. This is a frightful burden that I've got on hand; and the first time I ever come to you to ask you to help me you won't!"

"No, no, Sylvia; I didn't say that. Let me think a minute. Don't you see that this is such a very intimate and particular sort of thing, with which I do not know that I ought to intermeddle?" Yet even as she spoke Esther remembered how Roger had come to her to ask her if she could help him to find out whether or not Sylvia was happy in her engagement. Was that, perhaps, a reason why she might be able to undertake this strange task? Sylvia's face was pleading and almost pathetic. Suddenly Esther's resolve was made.

"But if you wish it very much; if you put it like that, Sylvia, then I will help you with your burden. I will tell Mr. Murchison for you . . . and I will do it as gently as I can. But I simply hate to have to hurt him so. Oh, I cannot think how you can do it, Sylvia; no, I can't."

"If it wasn't for—Lawrence—I suppose I never should have done it. But now I can't do anything else! You are an angel, Esther. I know you will do it beautifully. Roger thinks a lot of you! Yes, he does. I can tell that by the way he speaks of you. And I don't wonder either. When Lawrence and I are married, and have our house in town as well as his family place, I shall make you come and see me a lot! We will always be friends; won't we, Esther darling? I am so grateful to you. I feel like the Pilgrim when his pack had rolled off his back; I do, indeed!"

But Esther's face was very grave as she

walked home through the gardens and parklands. A heavy weight seemed to rest upon her spirit. She knew that Roger was coming that evening to bring to her father some of the firm's books, which he was now able to examine and make up; and she felt that if an opportunity arose, she had better execute this unwelcome task without further delay. Sylvia's position was a very false one; how the girl had managed to bear it as long as she had done perplexed Esther. Certainly, if she had to tell the truth to Roger, she had better get it over as quickly as possible. In a few days Sir Lawrence would arrive as Mr. Walton's guest; certainly it was time for something to be done!

Roger arrived at dusk, bringing the books with him, and the motor was dismissed. The Bungalow was a very convenient house for an invalid. Mr. Danby's pleasant room opened upon the verandah, and there was a door between it and the living room which Esther occupied during the day. Her bedroom was on the other side of her father's, so that by day and night she felt to have him under her care. He spent his days upon a wide couch, and his room was quickly transformed into a parlour for the day by Esther's deft hands and the adjustment of a curtain and sundry rugs.

Roger was well accustomed to drop in and sit with the invalid, discussing business with him, or chatting of other matters; and Esther would pass in and out, as she did to-day, bringing them tea, and then withdrawing to the sitting-room herself, where she thought that their guest would probably join her before he went away.

He did this. She heard his cheery farewell of her father, and her heart began to beat almost to suffocation. Then the door opened, and Roger came in, smiling in that pleasant, friendly fashion of his that she knew so well; and as his glance fell upon her face, from which some of the colour had fled, he said:

"Why, Miss Danby, what is the matter? You look bad."

"No, no. I am quite well. It is only—only— Please, will you sit down, Mr. Murchison?—for I have something to say."

He sat down instantly. His face assumed a different look. He glanced at the troubled face of the girl, and he partly understood.

"You have something to tell me," he said quietly, "about—Sylvia, I think."

She flashed him a quick, almost appealing

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look. Her eyes were bright with unshed tears of pity. Here was a man who seemed only to live to make happiness and welfare for others, and he had to suffer cruel pain himself—and hers was to be the hand to deal the blow which should rob him of the crown of his earthly life!

As if he partly read the suffering which she was feeling, he added, speaking in the same quiet, gentle way :

"Do not be afraid to tell me. Remember, it was I who asked you to talk with Sylvia. Perhaps I ought not to have put that burden upon you. But I suppose by this time you have found out for yourself that you are one of the burden-bearers of the world! I am not the first who has come to you, I know, and I shall not be the last."

Esther remembered Sylvia's words. How strange that both of them should have appealed to her in their trouble and perplexity. Somehow, this feeling of helping them through an acute crisis gave her courage. She looked gravely into Roger's expectant eyes.

"I have talked with Sylvia, and you are right in what you have been feeling about her. She has changed."

"Ah! I was sure of it. A year ago—fifteen months now, in fact—when she gave herself to me—it was without reservation. She would have married me then and there, but her parents thought her too young; we were to wait for a year. And now—"

"That was it, I suppose. She was very young. She had seen so little of life—she had seen so few—other men—" It was getting very hard to go on. Roger's eyes, which had been soft and tender so far, took a new expression, more alert and vigilant. His question was almost sharply spoken,

"You mean that I have been supplanted?"

"I think that Sylvia was too young to know her own mind a year ago. Girls are very romantic. You had been away. You had been through perils. You came home with a glamour about you—and her parents wanted it—everything seemed to push her that way—"

"And as time went on she found out that, after all, it was only old Roger after all—the boy she had played with, the youth she had tyrannised over! The glamour faded, and only the prose remained. And in London she saw other men—gay, gallant young sparks—and understood better what the life of Mayfair was like, as distinguished from the life that a business man's wife leads."

"But can you wonder very much, after all? She is so pretty and charming; she has always done what she pleased. She has almost been taught to be a butterfly."

"And she thinks that I should want her to join the ranks of the working bees?"

"She feels that your interests would not be hers—that you want to lead the kind of life she could not share. She knows how noble, how unselfish you are, how you toil and think for others."

Roger just lifted his hand, as though to stop this sudden burst of enthusiasm which sprang spontaneously to Esther's lips. Her eyes were shining; her face was, as it were, transfigured. She was thinking of all the things she had learned and observed about Roger Murchison during these past weeks, and the innocent, girlish hero-worship of her heart seemed to find expression in her face and in her words. But she stopped short at his gesture.

"Of course, I have known that Sylvia's training has left much to be desired. But I have always thought and hoped that our mutual love would be strong enough—" He stopped suddenly short, and rose to his feet. Esther dared not look at him; she looked into the fire instead, and drops hung upon her long lashes, which she did not dare to try and brush away.

"But the fault perhaps has been mine. I have been very much engrossed of late. I have bored her with my plans and projects. She thinks that life with me will be—"

"Ah, but it is not that—altogether. It is because somebody else has come into her life. Perhaps without that she would have gone on, for she likes you, trusts you, hates to hurt you—is afraid for what will happen."

"And so she has put the burden upon your shoulders. It is for somebody else to come to her aid and bear the brunt of it."

"Ah, but she has no sister, and no intimate girl friend. I know it must seem terribly intrusive of me, but—"

"But we both appealed to you when we were in perplexity, Esther, and you have tried to serve us both!"

Her heart gave a sudden leap. She saw that her name had passed his lips unconsciously. It seemed to tell her that he thought of her as "Esther" now, through association with her father and with Sylvia—just as she thought of him as "Roger," though —

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"Am I to know the name of my supplanter?" he asked suddenly.

"It is Sir Lawrence Annesley, her brother's friend."

"A man she has known for a few weeks only!"

Their eyes met. Esther had nothing more to say. The whole situation seemed to her fraught with pathos and perplexity. The only consolation she obtained at this moment was that Roger did not look like a badly stricken man. She could not altogether read his face; there were many mixed emotions shining out of his grave, steadfast eyes. Yet the hurt, if sore, was not mortal: that much she divined, and could rejoice at it. But, oh, what Sylvia was throwing away! That was the poignant mystery to her.

Roger came up and took her hand.

"I thank you for telling me the truth—and for telling it me so kindly. Good-bye. Perhaps I shall go away for a short time—for Sylvia's sake. Meantime let me tell you how glad I am that she and I have such a friend as you."

CHAPTER VII

A HUNTING MORNING

SYLVIA, I do not like it—I do not indeed!"

Sylvia's mother was the speaker, and her daughter made a whimsical little grimace as these words fell on her ears.

She made a very charming picture, standing there in the shaft of sunshine which fell through the oriel window of her mother's pleasant morning room. For the dark green of her well-cut habit set off the peculiar fairness and delicate texture of her skin, and the shining gold of the wavy hair, which was becomingly tucked away beneath a little hunting cap of velvet of the same hue. Sylvia's bright eyes were dancing; there was a vivid glow upon her cheeks. She looked the personification of girlish grace, beauty, and health, and her mother's eyes involuntarily beamed as she gazed upon her darling—even though that darling had given her a very disappointing shock just lately.

"Mummy darling, don't be tiresome! Why don't you want me to go? Daddy always takes me with him, and now he's away there's Syd—and—and Lawrence—to take care of me."

"That's exactly my objection!" rapped out Mrs. Walton with an unwonted show of firmness. "I should mind it much less if Sir Lawrence were not here."

"Mummy, you have got to call him Lawrence; and you must really stop being nasty about him—you must indeed! You know you really like him very much—nobody could help it."

"I am not sure that I do, Sylvia. I think he behaved in an underhand manner—and led you into the same fault. He has many good qualities, and your father has consented, so I shall say no more as to that. But I have my own opinions, and my own ideas of what is right and fitting for girls. Three weeks ago you were engaged to Roger, and everybody knew it. Perhaps people know now that the engagement is broken off, but that is no reason why you should be seen flaunting about the hunting field with another lover beside you! Even your father said that he would not hear of any announcement to outsiders before Christmas."

"Well, mummy, I'm not going to pin a label on my back advertising our engagement, nor shall we shout it out through a megaphone, either! Lawrence is staying here, and, of course, he rides to the meet with us. What could anybody say to that?"

"They might say a good deal if they happened to see your face when you are talking to—well, Lawrence, if you will have it!"

Sylvia kissed her mother effusively, for that good lady had not been at all pleased by the sudden turn her daughter's affairs were taking, and she had not shared her husband's view that, since Sylvia had plenty of money to her own fortune, perhaps a baronet with a fine landed property, which this same fortune would adequately maintain, might be a better match for her than Roger, who had only his money and good qualities to recommend him, but would not raise Sylvia into a different social sphere. So that, though affairs had gone smoothly on the whole for the spoilt child, the girl had felt that her mother was not reconciled, and that was the drop of bitterness in her cup. Mrs. Walton would not readily accept Lawrence as a future son-in-law.

"Let them say what they like, mummy darling. What do we care? I am proud of loving Lawrence, and don't mind who knows it. It isn't my fault that daddy had to go off yesterday after everything had been settled about the meet. So I'm going

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—I really must go. I should cry my eyes out at home if I didn't. Good-bye, darling—don't look so solemn over it! I've got Syd to play old gooseberry. What does anything else matter?"

"Well, all I know is that it will be all over the county before night, and you will get the reputation of a flirt and a jilt—"

"What will that matter when I shall be Lady Annesley by this time three months? They won't call me nasty names then. They will be much too full of hopes of an invitation to Annesley Court, when it is all put in order for us!"

Sylvia danced away, light of foot and of heart; and Mrs. Walton, left alone, shook her head and wondered why girls of the present generation were so different from what they had been in her day—not, perhaps, sufficiently considering that in her day parents had exercised more discipline and restraint over their children, and had not thought that to give them "a good time" was the first and most important matter during their childhood and youth.

Yet had the mother been able to read the heart of her daughter she would have seen that something was stirring there which would have astonished her, and was, in point of fact, astonishing Sylvia herself. For the girl experienced a sudden recoil of feeling. She was wondering whether, after all, she did want to go to the hunt, riding by the side of Sir Lawrence Annesley and drawing down the remarks of the whole field upon herself.

Sylvia was thoughtless—a little butterfly creature, prone to take the responsibilities of life without much seriousness. But she came of a stock which had placed duty high amongst the virtues, and had made it the pivot upon which life revolved. And the very fact that love, unselfish and deep, had stirred the girl's somewhat shallow heart, made for developments sudden and unexpected.

Outside her mother's room she came to a pause. She stood at the sunny corridor window, thinking. I will not say that, in some scarcely conscious fashion, she might not even be praying. Perhaps she had some faint perception that in the days which were coming, in that shadowy future over which she could not but dream, a day might dawn when she would have daughters of her own to train and guide and counsel. How should she wish that they would receive her admonitions and advice? How

would it seem to her then if girls should claim the right to judge for themselves, to—

"Sylvia, Sylvia—are you never coming? The horses are here, and I have been scouring the house for you!"

Sir Lawrence was striding down the corridor with a frown on his handsome face. Like many other masculine creatures, he resented being kept waiting.

"Lawrence dear, will you come here a moment?"

"What is it, Sylvia? We are late as it is. Can't you come now, and do the talking as we ride to the meet?"

It was not the words he spoke, but the way in which he spoke them, that suddenly roused Sylvia to a consciousness of something in this man which she had not recognised before—a tyrannical exercise of power, a slighting fashion of treating her—and Sylvia had not been used to this!

"No, we can't!" she suddenly flashed out, "because I'm not going to the meet at all!"

"You are not?"

"No, I am not. Mother does not wish me to, now that father is not here to go with us."

"And I wish that you should, Sylvia."

He spoke almost threateningly, and the girl's temper rose instantly. She was not used to such a tone.

"My mother's wishes must stand first!"

He sneered openly. He was in a black mood. It was Sylvia's first experience of her lover in this humour. It brought her to pause; it almost frightened her. The man advanced with something threatening and lowering in his aspect. He stood close in front of her, devouring her with his eyes, but without any softening of his expression.

"That won't do, Sylvia. We must come to an understanding. I thought that a woman left father and mother—"

"When she is married, yes—but not before."

"And you put your mother's wishes before mine?"

"To-day I do. I see that she is right."

He set his jaw grimly and square.

"You have got to choose between us, Sylvia. You had better think well before you disobey me. I say—come!"

If he had wooed, he might have won her. But this hectoring tone set all the pulses of the indulged and petted daughter tingling with indignation.

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"I shall obey my mother," she said, holding her head very high, her mouth set firmly to control any trembling of the lips; for this was the first quarrel she had had with her lover, and the looks of Sir Lawrence were black.

"Then go your own way, and tie yourself to your mother's apron-strings for the rest of your natural life—for all I care!" spoke the man in a low tone that seemed to come hissing through his lips. And, so saying, he turned on his heel and marched away, and a few minutes later the girl heard the clatter of horse-hoofs in the courtyard as her brother and lover rode off.

Lover! Was he that any longer? Sylvia waited in a fever of anxiety all the day, but nothing happened. When her brother returned it was with a message that Sir Lawrence had ridden off home with some friends living in the neighbourhood, and that his things were to be sent off to him there.

"Strikes me you've put your foot into it, Sis!" spoke Sydney, half amused and half vexed. "However, I believe these little tiffs are quite the right thing during courtship. Better have a few then—in preparation for holy matrimony, when they are much more plentiful, I believe!"

Sylvia's mother was very tender to her during the days which passed after Sir Lawrence's departure. But even to her Sylvia did not open her heart.

A great many battles were raging there, and Sylvia's whole nature was torn and rent in a fashion which was to leave abiding traces. But she spoke little—and her mother was not her confidante. In fact when ten days had passed by, and the necessity to speak to someone came upon her in a fashion not to be resisted, it was across the dim, misty park that she fled one dusky afternoon, and her goal was The Bungalow house, where Esther Danby was sure to be found at this hour.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

"ESTHER, Esther, I must tell somebody! And you always understand! I have broken my engagement with Lawrence!"

"Sylvia dear—why?"

Esther faced round startled; then, seeing the grief and woe struggling together with offended pride in the girl's eyes, she took

her into the embrace of her strong, tender arms.

"Poor little Sylvie—tell me all about it."

In a burst of tears and a burst of words out came the tale of the hunting morning.

"I knew he was angry, but I thought he would see that I was right, when he had time to think about it. And though he went away, I was sure he would write. But he didn't write! And Sydney said he was 'carrying on' with some American heiress, and that if I wanted to 'whistle him back' I'd better look sharp about it!" Sylvia's words came in little broken spasms. "And instead of doing that I wrote and broke it off. Oh, Esther, do comfort me, for I am very wretched!"

"Dear little Sylvia, I am so grieved for you!"

"There must be something wrong with me. First Roger now Lawrence! Nobody will ever want to marry a girl who does things like that! But father and mother will both of them want me to take—Roger—back. Oh, what shall I do?"

Esther felt a little thrill run through her. A tiny stab of pain darted through her heart.

"I think, dearest, that as you are trying to do right, that you will get help and guidance through the trouble. Sylvia, do you ever pray about these things? Do you ask God's counsel when it all looks so dark and difficult?"

"I'm—not quite sure—"

"If you did, Sylvia, you would always get help. So very, very often we cannot see our way ourselves; but God sees it, and He will show it to us."

The girls sat hand in hand a long while, sometimes talking, sometimes silent, but with Sylvia's affairs in the forefront of their thoughts. How would her future life shape itself? Would she ever regain the love that she had lost?

Just a week later Roger, coming back from the office and marching straight into his own room, was startled by the apparition of Sylvia, who sprang up from a chair beside the hearth, and stood quivering and smiling and blushing there upon the rug—as he had seen her so often in the days of yore—her hands held out in welcome, her eyes almost unnaturally bright.

"Sylvia! Why, what brings you here?"

"Are you glad to see me, Roger?" Her voice shook a little. His answer was given in a tone entirely kind and fraternal.

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"To be sure I am! Weren't we always friends? What can I do for you, Sylvie? Do you want my help?"

She had subsided into the chair again. Her small face was framed between her two hands. Something in her aspect perplexed him—just a little dismayed him.

"Roger—have they told you?"

"Of your engagement, Sylvie? Well, not exactly, but, of course, I knew it was only a matter of time. I hope—"

"You don't understand, Roger. I have broken it off."

"Broken what off?"

"The sort of engagement I made with Sir Lawrence—when I threw you over, Roger. Father and mother would not have it announced, but people began to know. You knew, and Esther, and other people guessed. But it's all over now!"

It was difficult for Roger to know what to say, but he spoke words which were literally and entirely true.

"I am sorry, Sylvie."

"I did it. He was rude and disagreeable—about mother. I was angry; he was angry. Only at first I thought—but it didn't come right. I got more angry. I broke it off. I believe he is going to marry somebody else. And Roger—dear Roger—I have come back to you!"

The young man's face became very grave and still.

"I do not quite understand you, Sylvie."

She was not looking at him, but into the fire.

"Roger, I've been thinking a great deal about doing what is right—not just pleasing oneself. Father and mother want it, I know. They would be so pleased. And I do like you very much, and you would never be nasty to me. You would help me to be good, and it would make everybody pleased and happy."

He was almost smiling now. He stood before her, and looked down at the pretty, tumbled, curly head, from which the hat had been removed before he came in.

"Sylvia, have you come to me because—you love me?"

"I like you so very, very much, Roger—"

"Sylvie, do you love me?"

She looked up at him, and their eyes met. Hers were tearful and trustful, but there was no true love in them—only the affection of the little sister and playmate—nothing more.

He knelt down upon the rug before her, and took both her hands in his. His manner was very kind and gentle, but there was no hint of the lover in it, as she was quick to feel.

"Sylvia, my dear little sister and friend, a little while ago you did a very brave and sensible thing in telling me—or getting somebody else to tell me—that you did not love me in the right way for a wife. Has anything come to change that?"

She did not know what to reply, but the tears fell slowly from her eyes in large crystal drops.

"The only change is that then you loved Sir Lawrence Annesley, whilst now—"

"I believe I love him still—though I am so angry!" sobbed Sylvia. "I don't believe I shall ever love anybody else. But I like you better than anybody in the world, Roger, and if—if—if you feel—"

"Thank you, Sylvia dear, for saying that. But I do not feel that it would be either for your happiness or mine. Let us always be friends—dear friends—brother and sister, if you will. But for the rest, no. It would not be wise or right for either of us. You will grow to see it in time, dear. Indeed, I think you half know it now."

Sylvia did half know, and yet she was disappointed. She had planned how she would please everybody and reinstate herself in her own little world by this act; and it seemed just a little hard that Roger should not see things as she did. To Esther she poured out the whole tale, keeping nothing back.

"Do you think it will ever come right?" she wistfully asked. "Esther, you are such a friend of Roger's. Perhaps you could say something."

But when Esther, setting aside all thought of self—even seeking not to know what it was that lay enshrined in her heart which gave her such pain, and yet such joy—did try to "say something" about her girl friend, she was met by another "something," nameless and intangible, in Roger's look and manner, that set her heart off beating wildly, yet was no answer to her words.

She saw Roger often in these days, for she was helping him with many of his Christmas enterprises—his gifts, his doles, his inquiries into the circumstances of the tenants, villagers, and labourers of the estate and district.

But there was one matter which Esther often tried to discuss, and which Roger

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somehow always put aside. It was the question of Mr. Danby's future and his daughter's.

"We cannot always live at the dear Bungalow," she would begin sometimes, wondering how her father would stand the racket of the old life when it was resumed; but Roger always cut her short with his kindly smile and finality of tone.

"Wait till after Christmas—that is the bargain. After Christmas we will discuss all these things. Till then we have enough on our hands and minds. And remember that you and your father are to be our guests at The Chase for our Yuletide festival. I am depending upon you for that."

This Christmastide was going to be a season of joy and delight for all. The Murchison house was filling with relatives and friends. So was the Waltons'. High revel would be held in both, and already Esther was the idol of a number of small Murchison boys and girls, the children of cousins or friends, some of them far away in India, who always knew that "Roger" was to be depended upon for giving a good time to the children at Christmas.

Esther was returning across the white-coated fields with two small boys running at her side, when a woman signalling across the snow made her pause, and in another minute she had reached the cottage.

"I'm so glad you passed this way, ma'am. I'm fair puzzled what to do. I'm sure 'twas a motor-car done it. I heard one go sizzling by like an express train, and then my man he came along and found the gentleman lying in the ditch. He's not fair come to yet, he hasn't; but he keeps calling for 'Sylvia—Sylvia!' And me knowing as that is the name of——"

"Let me see!" spoke Esther, hastily entering the cottage, where, upon an oak settle under the window, such as some country cottages still possess, a tall figure was extended, a figure with a bandage round brow and eyes, which did not yet disguise the face enough to make it unrecognisable, and Esther uttered a startled exclamation:

"Sir Lawrence Annesley!"

He seemed to hear the sound of a different voice. He held out both his hands.

"Sylvia!" he said.

"I am not Sylvia," Esther answered gently; "but I am Sylvia's friend."

"Miss Danby—I am sure it's Miss Danby—the Esther she used to speak of."

"Yes—I am Esther Danby."

"I was coming to her—to ask her—to forgive. I was wrong. I can't live without her. I was coming to tell her so. And the fellows were half screwed; I told them they were not fit to drive, but they would not listen. I knew we should come to a smash—or smash somebody else. I slipped out, but it was farther than I thought. I fell—I've hurt my head somehow. I don't see clearly. Where am I? I was going to Sylvia. I want to ask pardon of Sylvia before——"

His mind seemed to wander away. Esther was writing rapidly in her notebook. She tore out the leaf and gave it to one of the small boys who were with her.

"Run as hard as you can, both of you. Give that to Uncle Roger. Say I shall stay here till he comes. Run, both of you, as hard as you can."

He was "Uncle Roger" to all the small fry. They flew to do her bidding. Esther sat down again by the patient, looked at his injuries, which were cuts, abrasions and contusions about the head, whilst a briar had badly torn his brow and hurt the eyes in some measure. He spoke from time to time—always of Sylvia, and always of his own selfishness towards her and his haughty temper.

"Will she forgive? Do you think she will forgive—my gentle little love—my little Silver Queen!"

* * * * *

That night Sir Lawrence Annesley lay beneath the roof-tree of the Murchisons' house, and Roger watched over him, reporting on the morrow that a great change for the better had taken place, and that convalescence would quickly follow.

It was Christmas Eve. The big mixed party for children and adults would take place. The house was a bower of holly and mistletoe, the walls resounded with happy laughter and eager children's voices.

Sylvia was to be there, of course—and dressed as a fairy, looking as lovely as a fairy queen herself, she detached the wonderful presents from the tree, though it was Roger and Esther who distributed them to the eager children waiting for the spoil.

Was there a little sadness in Sylvia's face? Perhaps just a shade of wistfulness in the pretty eyes, though she seemed all brightness, laughter, and fun to the little people who shrieked with glee at her



"Sylvia, looking as lovely as a fairy queen herself, detached the wonderful presents from
the tree."

THE QUIVER

sallies. Roger watched and noted all, and seized his moment to approach Sylvia with a message.

"Your mother wants you," he said with a queer little gleam in his eye which she did not understand.

"My mother? Where is she?" asked the girl, looking round wonderingly. "Is she ill? Oh, take me now!"

"She is not ill. Do not be afraid. But be prepared for a surprise. Not exactly a shock—but—"

They had reached a closed door on the upper landing. Sylvia could wait no longer. She flew in—and stopped short.

Her mother was seated beside a couch. A man lay upon that couch, her mother was smiling and bending over him. Sylvia recoiled with a cry of immense surprise.

"Lawrence!"

"Sylvia! My darling—my little queen! Your mother has forgiven me for all my many misdeeds. Sylvia, will you try to forgive me too?"

"Lawrence—Lawrence! What has happened?"

She was on her knees beside him, his pale face, his bandaged head, his half-closed eyes—all appealed to every womanly instinct in her nature. He gripped her hands so hard that she was reassured as to his strength of body, but her sweet, anxious eyes devoured his face.

"Lawrence, what have you done to yourself?"

"Nothing much, my darling. Perhaps it was a blessed accident. I wanted to come to you. I could not keep away from the neighbourhood where I might meet you. And when Christmas was upon us I felt I must see you again. Then I got thrown out of a car and damaged a little—not badly, and some good Samaritan took me in. Sylvia dearest, I see that I was wrong. Can you forgive me and take me back?"

Her arms were already about his neck, and in silence a new and better pact was made.

"Do you know, Esther," asked Roger a little later, as they met in the great hall whilst half the little folks were in at supper and half waiting their turn to go, "I took Sylvia upstairs half an hour ago? Do you know all that has happened?"

"I know. I know. I saw them just now through the open door. They both looked so happy. Oh, Roger, are you sure—quite sure, that you do not mind?"

She did not know what she had called him, but he heard—and understood. He turned upon Esther the light of a strange, long look.

"Esther, do you think that I—mind?"

He looked at her—she looked at him, and then his hands went out towards her, and she put hers into them as though their home was there. His closed over them so fast.

"Esther, Esther—my life! Do you not understand—yet?"

She knew it all then. Had she not known it for long? The flood of joy and love was so intense—so wonderful—that she closed her eyes as it swept over her. When she opened them again it was to find herself in Roger's arms, to feel the kiss of love upon her lips—to know that he loved her, as she knew that she loved him.

"Oh, Roger!" she said. "Oh, Roger, is it a dream?"

"A dream which is turning into a sweet reality, my darling—my life—my sweet wife!"

Another sound broke in upon them now—the sound of gay children's voices, punctuated by shrieks and little gusts of baby laughter and glee.

"Oh, look, look, look! Oh, come quick and see! There's Uncle Roger and Esther together under the mistletoe—and he's just been kissing her there!"



Grateful Women

WOMEN who have had the dreadful misfortune to be over-stout and who have been radically cured of the disease of obesity by means of the simple and harmless Antipon treatment, write in their hundreds to the Antipon Company in pure gratitude for benefits received. The attainment of natural beauty of figure and graceful proportions generally is not the least of the boons conferred by Antipon, which has an admirable tonic and refortifying effect on the entire organism. The reduction of weight, speedy and sure as it is, is accompanied always by an increase of vitality and strength truly astonishing. The following is an extract from a letter written by a grateful lady from her home in Sussex:—"I am most completely satisfied with the result of the Antipon treatment in my case. It has not only decreased the painful stoutness, but it has had a wonderful effect on my whole system. I feel better than I have done for a long, long time. When I had recourse to Antipon it was a counsel of desperation, for I felt so far from well and so utterly run down and unfit for any exertion. I feel a different being now." And so it is in every case.

Stout ladies are rather more at a disadvantage at the present time than they used to be. Fashion decrees that they should wear close-fitting attire, and this tends to accentuate faults of figure in a most unflattering way. Ladies are loud in their praise of Antipon for what that remarkable product has done for them in the way of getting rid of super-abundant flesh. To take a short course of Antipon is to be entirely "in the fashion." Sometimes a single bottle of Antipon is enough to accomplish the necessary correction of figure and proportions; but in cases of long-neglected obesity a more protracted treatment is *de rigueur*.

The decrease of weight within the first day and night varies between 8 oz. and 3 lb., according to the excess of superfluous adipose. In extreme cases of obesity the latter figure has not infrequently been exceeded. When the weight has been reduced to the normal standard the doses of Antipon are no longer required; for the product has the priceless power of killing the tendency to make more fat than the economy is in need of. It is this particular virtue of permanent eradication of the obese tendency which has made Antipon so famous throughout the world.

The tonic value of Antipon cannot be overestimated. Especially on the digestive system is this evidenced. The appetite is greatly improved, and the digestive and assimilative systems are perfected, with the result that the whole organism is thoroughly renovated, and through the new, rich, red blood formed, the muscular fibre is renovated. This accounts for the finely-modelled proportions which are a result of the Antipon treatment, the gross superfluous

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The dangerous excess of fatty matter which clogs the vital machinery is cleared away by Antipon, and the heart and other organs are equal to their work, which, in the obese condition of the body, is inadequately performed, to the great detriment of health.

Antipon is vegetable in composition and quite harmless. It is an agreeably tart and refreshing liquid.

Antipon is sold in bottles, price 2s. 6d. and 4s. 6d., by Chemists, Stores, etc., or in case of disappointment may be obtained (on sending amount), carriage paid, in private package, direct from the Antipon Company, Olmar Street, London, S.E.



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A New Competition for "Quiver" Readers

By THE EDITOR

First Prize: Lady's or Gentleman's Gold Watch

Second Prize: £10 in Goods

Six Thermos Flasks, Six Onoto Fountain Pens, and Book Prizes

SO successful have been the competitions run in connection with THE QUIVER for the past few years, that I have much pleasure in acceding to the requests of readers and announcing another competition for the winter months. It has been somewhat difficult to hit upon a new idea that would appeal to all our readers, and yet at the same time carry out the policy we have adopted in connection with all our competitions—of affording pleasure and profit to other people. But I think that my readers will agree that the scheme I shall put before them will well fulfil these conditions.

Last year, it will be remembered, QUIVER readers all over the world sent me dressed dolls for the use of children in the missions stations in India. That competition was in every sense of the word successful: letter after letter has reached me to say what joy the offerings of our readers brought into the lives of little heathen children.

Now I am going to ask my readers—particularly the members of The League of Loving Hearts—to unite in an effort to bring sunshine into the lives of poor little children at home. For a long time past I have been asking for money contributions towards the support of the ten Societies mentioned on the next page, and readers have been most generous. This new effort is intended to elicit not merely an offering of money, but a contribution of thought, time, and talent.

The competition, then, is for

The Best Home-made Toy

sent in in accordance with the conditions I shall presently mention.

The First Prize: A Benson £25 Gold Watch

I have arranged for really splendid prizes for this competition, well worthy of the best efforts that readers may put

into their work. The First Prize is a Handsome "Field" Gold Watch, either Lady's or Gentleman's, made by Messrs. J. W. Benson, Ltd., the well-known watchmakers of Ludgate Hill, London, of the value of £25. Messrs. Benson are, of course, known the world over for the reliability of their watches, but "The Field" is specially designed to give absolute satisfaction under any conditions of heat or cold, home or rough wear. It is fitted with a highly finished, half-chronometer movement, of the best London make, with detached lever escapement, balance staff holes jewelled in diamonds, and the rest of the jewellings in rubies, true chronometer balance, etc., in massive 18-carat gold hunting, half-hunting, or crystal glass case—in fact, it is the best all-round watch I can discover at any of the makers.

Second Prize: £10 Worth of Goods

For the Second Prize I have arranged to give an order for £10 on Messrs. Gamage, Ltd., of Holborn. As every one knows, Messrs. Gamage's stock includes almost everything from footballs to furniture, and the winner of the second prize will have almost endless choice for a really handsome present. If convenient, the recipient may personally visit Messrs. Gamage's great emporium and select one or a hundred items to make up the £10. Or the firm will forward one of their complete illustrated catalogues from which choice may be made.

Six Prizes of Thermos Flasks

For each of the next six in order of merit I shall be pleased to award a Thermos Flask, value One Guinea. These Thermos Flasks are simply invaluable for keeping tea, coffee, milk, or other liquids hot or cold for hours, and those fortunate enough to secure them

THE QUIVER

will find their uses every day of the year.

Six Prizes of Onoto Fountain Pens

So that there shall be plenty of chance for readers, I am extending the list of prizes and giving to each of the next six one of those useful Onoto Fountain Pens, which are so deservedly popular.

For the next twelve—making twenty-six prizes in all—there will be handsome Book Prizes.

What is Wanted

There is plenty of scope for ingenuity and skill on the part of readers in this competition. I want home-made toys, of any sort or size (within reasonable limits, that is), made of any sort of material—wood, iron, cloth, wool, cotton, etc.—anything that will interest and amuse a child. Under this description would come, of course, a wooden horse, a doll, a miniature flying machine, a boat, a house, a pair of reins—the list can be added to almost indefinitely. Try to think what a child would like—what you used to like—and then use whatever skill you have in any direction to produce something that will please and amuse.

It is not my intention that any reader shall have unfair advantage by the purchase of costly materials, so I am—as in the last competition—limiting the amount that may be spent on materials to One Shilling. Any little odds and ends one happens to have by may be used on the toy, but not more than One Shilling may be spent on the purchase of materials.

The toys must be hand-made—of course some of the materials you may buy will have to be in some sense or other manufactured, but the more of the competitor's

own work appears on the toy the more favour will his or her article have in the eyes of the judges.

In all matters relating to this competition the Editor's decision is to be final.

Who May Compete

This competition is for the members of The League of Loving Hearts, an organisation founded some years ago in connection with THE QUIVER expressly to help charitable institutions. But any readers who are not members may join the League by filling up the Coupon to be found in the advertisement section of this issue, and forwarding, as directed, with a minimum subscription of One Shilling—which is divided among the Societies mentioned below.

When to Start

First of all, join the League if you are not already a member, and then you may spend the time between now and Christmas in thinking out what you will make. Further particulars of the competition will appear in our next issue. *I shall announce the last date for sending in the toys in an early issue.*

Where the Toys will Go

We shall distribute the toys sent by competitors among those institutions in connection with the League which have to do with the care of poor children. As will be seen by the following list, most of the Societies either devote all their attention to children, or else have special juvenile departments. We shall therefore divide the money received from the League among all of the following, and the toys among most of them:—

- DR. BARNARDO'S HOMES, Stepney Causeway, E.
RAGGED SCHOOL UNION, 32, John Street, Theobald's Road, W.C.
CHURCH ARMY, 55, Bryanston Street, W.
SALVATION ARMY (Social Work), Queen Victoria Street, E.C.
MISS AGNES WESTON'S WORK, Royal Sailors' Rest, Portsmouth.
THE QUEEN'S HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN, Hackney Road, Bethnal Green, E.
LONDON CITY MISSION, 3, Bridewell Place, E.C.
ORPHAN WORKING SCHOOL, 73, Cheapside, E.C.
CHURCH OF ENGLAND SOCIETY FOR PROVIDING HOMES FOR WAIFS AND STRAYS,
Old Town Hall, Kennington Road, S.E.
BRITISH HOME AND HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES, 72, Cheapside, E.C.



BIRD'S CUSTARD

as a Hot Sauce



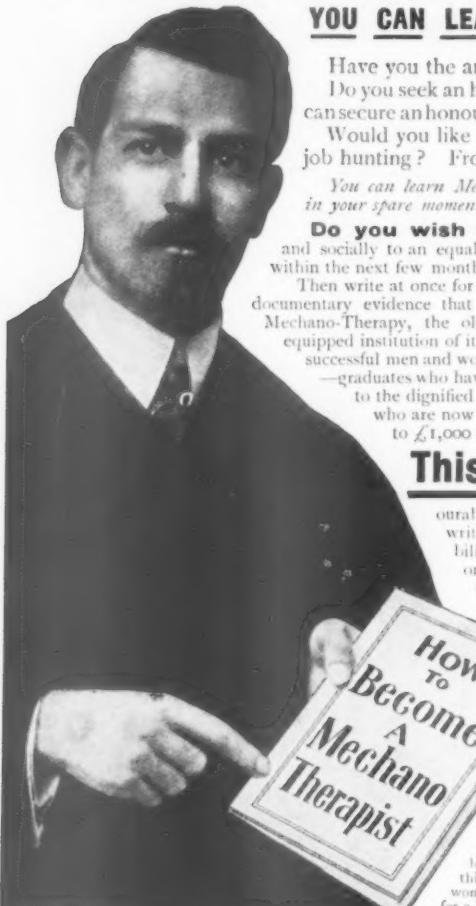
'If wit be sauce to mirth
Then As I am a Saucy Fool
Bird's Custard is The Sauce
for all good pudding'

☛ Prepare the Custard according to the usual method and serve at once while HOT.

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Then write at once for the book I hold in my hand, which proves by documentary evidence that from the Halls of the American College of Mechano-Therapy, the oldest (established 1867), the largest and best equipped institution of its kind in the world, are being graduated daily, successful men and women—Doctors of Mechano-Therapy (D. M. T.)—graduates who have advanced themselves socially in a few months to the dignified calling of Doctors of Mechano-Therapy, and who are now able to, and actually do, earn incomes of £600 to £1,000 a year.

This FREE Book

This free guide to financial independence and honorable livelihood is yours for the asking. Simply write for it to-day. This book proves beyond possibility of contradiction that any man or woman of ordinary common school education may come to this college in person and learn in class—or be taught with the greatest success at his or her convenience at home by mail—the principles and practice of Mechano-Therapy—an elevating, fascinating, and dignified profession that has the unqualified endorsement and the active support of prominent members of the medical profession.

Write at once for this Book, which shows how we guarantee our students success in the study of this absorbing calling, make them the possessors of unusual and exclusive ability, advance them socially and financially, and give them a highly paid, short-houred and interesting calling, which anyone of average attainments can master in his own home in a few months' spare time study.

This Book, which describes the authorized diploma granted our graduates, the reasonable cost of tuition, the convenient terms of payment, and the actual bona-fide readiness of the new and unusual opportunity this college course opens up to all enterprising men and women, is *free*, and if you are ambitious, if you are looking for a life position in which you can make a name and fortune, if you would like furthermore to be independent of position-hunting and employers and wish to advance yourself financially and socially within a few months' time by home study—at small cost and on convenient terms—then write for it at once—write now while the special terms of tuition are in force.

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D. W. Shellenberger, M.T., writes: "Please send me one of your college buttons. I enclose money order for postage, and also wish to become a member of the State and National associations. I am glad to see our school doing so well, and will do all I can for the school. I am making from £2 to £3 a day and work seven days a week. I am busy all the time, and am sending patients to Dr. W. R. Shellenberger M.T., and the sanitarium, so you can see what a lot I have to do."

H. J. Harness, M.T., writes: "Have been established a month and am treating from seven to ten patients every day. Am in great demand."

Rufus W. Thornton, D. S., M.T., Ex-President State Dental Society, says: "I treated with perfect success a case of adipose abdomen, to the very great gratification of my patient. I treated several months ago, a case of sciatica, with entire relief of pain and symptoms, which have shown no return. I treated some minor ailments which yielded no particular results, but have had good success with them."

"I was satisfied from the course that it was built on a solid foundation and scientific basis, but from what I have seen I am doubly convinced."

The Addresses of the Above Graduates Will Be Furnished Upon Request.



YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHRISTMAS PAGES

DAVID +
APPLETON

HOW, WHEN AND WHERE CORNER

Conducted by "ALISON"

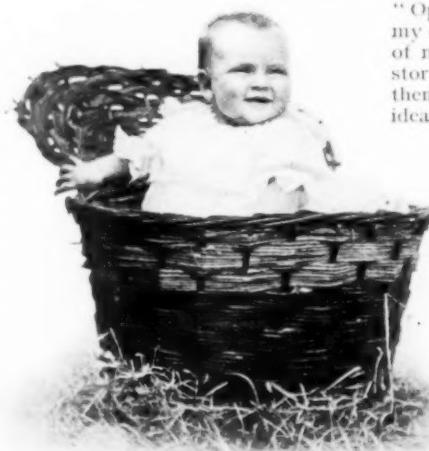
The Companionship Motto—"By Love Serve One Another"

To each and all of you, my dear Companions, I am giving the old-time greeting, "A Happy Christmas and a Glad-some New Year." Isn't it a wonderful thing that, even without the magic for which I was longing last month, I am able to send a Thought-Wish travelling to you across the seas and over the country separating us from one another? And I send it, too, in the belief that all our happy thoughts and desires for others do really carry influence and help their objects. My Christmas desire for you is that this may be the beginning of a gladder joy and truer prosperity than you have known previously. I imagine that many of you will be speeding the same Wish towards me, and the pleasant fancy adds to my enjoyment this December.

A little while ago my neighbour at a dinner table was a man whom I felt privileged to meet. Some of you know him, probably, though I won't mention his name now. He is a man who has great influence upon numbers of the young men students in our big city of London. We were talking about

children, telling all sorts of stories of them, and he gave some that were simply amusing, and some that were gracious and sweet. Presently I remembered a little incident of the time when I was a small girl. It happened when my father and mother and two young brothers and I were travelling. One of the boys was about four years old, and it was his first long railway journey. Never before had he been in a tunnel, and we had to pass through one of the longest and blackest that we have in England. It must have been a puzzling experience for him, and he evidently thought that our mother, for some unknown reason, had closed his eyes, for he began to cry out, "Open my eyes, Mother, open my eyes!" And the teacher of men, to whom I told the story, listened quietly, and then said, "What a beautiful idea is there!" Honestly, it had never occurred to me that there was any suggestiveness in the little fellow's cry, and I looked a moment in silence at my dinner-table neighbour. Then the thought in his mind

flashed into mine, and I answered, "Yes, I see what you mean; it is a beautiful idea." Since that chat it has often recurred to me,



A CHRISTMAS HAMPER

THE QUIVER

and I want you to hear in it the keynote of my little Christmas Message. You see, as we celebrate so joyously the time when the Christ opened the pure eyes of His holy childhood on earth, we may well make for ourselves a new prayer like the small boy's plea to his mother when in the tunnel, and say, "Open my eyes, Father, open my eyes to all Thou wouldst have me see."

Do you ever go for a walk, or a motor ride, or a cycle run, and afterwards try to recollect in detail what you have seen? I do, sometimes, and get very cross with, and ashamed of myself when I realise how superficial my glances have been, and how few definite details I can give of scenes I have passed through. Try to recount to yourself some particulars of the people and houses you have passed after your next walk, and you will understand what I mean, if you do not already. And I suppose God must often think us **very unobservant of all His marvellous works and goodness, and of His Spirit's presence.**

I cannot but think that each of us would be so very much happier if we kept our eyes wider open and more alert to see the Beautiful. If all of you have not read Browning's poems yet, you will some day, I hope, and you will find that he has one called "Christmas Eve," and in it he says:

"God who registers the cup
Of mere cold water, for His sake,
To a disciple rendered up,
Disdains not His own thirst to slake
At the poorest love was ever offered."

If we, like Him, are always looking for the Beautiful, we ourselves shall grow more and more like the Christ Child, and be more likely to recognise His voice when He calls for our service. Do you understand me?

How we want wide-open eyes to see the beauties out of doors in this month which we in England call "drear December." Yet there is as real loveliness in the bare hedges and the wide grey meadows as there is in leafy June. Only so many of us mope by the fire, and make ourselves (to say nothing of others) miserable, instead of going out to look for it, or studying it from the window. Can't you see the fine outlines of the trees' branches, and the delicate tracery of their twigs, lots more plainly than when they're covered with leaves? And do look at the exquisite colours of the bark.

Then how much better off we should be if we had eyes wide open to see all God means us to see in the people around us. There are some queer people in the world, are there not, who seem nasty and unkind, and you say there can't be anything beautiful in them.

But it makes it very different if we think that God sees something that is lovesome, or that might be made beautiful in them, and that perhaps He wants us to look for it and help *them* to cultivate it. Our little prayer, if we offer it sincerely and continuously, will help us to grow the kind of power that His eyes had.

Perhaps you have heard the legend about our Lord and the dead dog. The story says that Christ and His disciples were out walking one evening, and at the foot of a hill came to a narrow path that they were compelled to tread. Across it lay the dead body of a dog. The disciples were horrified at the sad sight of decay and unpleasantsness, and showed their disgust plainly. But as He went by He called their attention to the gleaming teeth, "What beautiful white teeth he had!" He exclaimed. Don't you think one of the best birthday gifts we might offer to Him this Christmas would be our resolve to follow His plan and look for the Beautiful always?

Let me tell you of a surprise "find" of mine. I was doing some work for children last year in London, and had to call one day to see a boy named Willie. He lived in a basement home under a tall house, and you had to go down awkward area steps to get at the "front door." He had been horribly ill for a long while, with a painful illness that had twisted his poor hands and feet and hurt him all over. The good doctors at a big hospital had done all they could for him, and he was getting better slowly, and they finally said he must go to Woodhall Spa, and have special baths and treatment for a month. Now Willie's father and mother had a lot of boys and girls to provide for, and they had very little money, and how to meet the expense of this journey and treatment was a dreadful puzzle to them. However, he did go, for some friends said if the family managed to pay half a crown a week they would pay the remainder. So Willie had his convalescent treatment, and I went to see if he were all right afterwards. His mother began to tell me all about it. And she brought George, another of her boys, into the story. "That was George who went out as you came in," she explained. He had seemed to me to be quite an ordinary, rather dull-looking schoolboy. Only my eyes, as you'll see, weren't sufficiently wide open. She told me that the previous summer had been a red-letter one for George, as he had managed to get together six shillings and had been taken to the country for his first visit—a whole fortnight. Unless you live in a big city, or at least have spent a whole summer

THE "ALABONE TREATMENT" OF CONSUMPTION, ASTHMA, ETC.

FURTHER EVIDENCE OF ITS SUCCESS.

THE great loss of valuable lives from the ravages of consumption, and the waste of public funds in the establishing of sanatoria which have proved to be perfectly ineffectual in accomplishing their object, is sad enough; but when one knows that this waste of money is unnecessary, and that the vast majority of these lives need not be sacrificed, it becomes incomparably sadder still. The last vestige of doubt must disappear from our minds when we see the enormous number of cases of consumption which have been treated with complete success, not only by Dr. E. W. Alabone himself, but by those physicians who have adopted his special inhalation system. Most specialists are now agreed that Dr. Alabone's method of treatment (known as the "Alabone" Treatment for Consumption and Asthma) is the only rational means whereby these diseases can be successfully dealt with; and this is not to be wondered at, seeing that a large number of medical men themselves, or members of their families, have been under Dr. Alabone's care, and been restored to health, after having received the verdict, "Your case is hopeless!"

On all sides we receive the same satisfactory reports: "I was given up to die, but am now well." Let us examine a few of these, taking first the evidence of medical men, as they certainly are in the best possible position to judge as to the merits or demerits of a treatment.

From a large pile of similar letters, we select the two following, which may be taken as typical of the others:—

"SIR,—I am glad to be able to report most favourably of the Alabone treatment. I do not think there is any doubt of its great efficacy, as I have already had over sixty cases of cure.

"DR. FAIRBAIRN, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S."

"SIR,—Such confidence have I that if any member of my family were to exhibit symptoms of phthisis, I should have no hesitation in placing the case under the treatment.

"—, M.D., M.R.C.S.Eng., J.P."

At Miss Sharman's Home, the well-known philanthropic Institute for Children, Dr. Alabone's treatment has been adopted for many years, and Miss Sharman's testimony is as follows:—

"Ada Burrow, aged twelve years, was admitted to the Orphan Home in June. In July she was taken ill with pleurisy, and our own doctor detected long-standing lung mischief. The child's relations were sent for and questioned, and confessed that she had repeatedly suffered from haemorrhage of the lungs, and they knew her to be hopelessly in consumption. The doctor confirmed this opinion. I had her taken to Dr. Alabone, who found her very emaciated, with a large cavity in the left lung. After steadily persevering with Dr. Alabone's treatment, Ada recovered. She is now in good general health, has gained flesh, has a good appetite, and is able to join in lessons and play with other children."—
"Edith Crane, aged thirteen, was taken ill suddenly in December, lost flesh rapidly, and had a high temperature. Our doctor found a cavity in the

left lung, and pronounced it a case of rapid phthisis. She came of a consumptive family. The child was placed under Dr. Alabone's treatment, and first saw him on January 3rd. On October 8th she was discharged by him as cured. She now looks well, eats and sleeps well, and shows no trace of the disease from which she has recovered. The two are fair sample cases, chosen from a large number which have been treated with equal success.

"(Signed) C. SHARMAN."

Next we may take nurses, who are certainly competent witnesses; space is only sufficient for extracts from one letter:—

"At the recommendation of a physician I went to a well-known sanatorium to undergo the 'open-air' treatment, and during my stay there of two months, instead of in any way ameliorating my symptoms they became rapidly worse, till in April, 1903, I was advised to return home by the physician in attendance at the sanatorium.

"Hearing of similar cases that had been cured by Dr. Alabone, I was taken to Highbury to see him—so weak that I was hardly able to walk up the steps of his house, and, I must admit, expecting little or nothing from his treatment; but within a week I felt that I was deriving benefit, and hope once more revived, and this alone was worth a great deal.

"I have no shortness of breath, no cough, no expectoration, can walk long distances and run upstairs without fatigue; my voice, which was only a whisper, has returned, and I can indulge in my favourite occupation of singing; in fact, thank God, I am perfectly cured, and again able to undertake my work, which is of a very arduous nature.

"Whilst attending at Dr. Alabone's, I have seen and heard of medical men who were bringing him their consumptive patients.

"I remain, yours obediently,

"A PROFESSIONAL NURSE."

The unprecedented success which has attended the use of the "Alabone" treatment stands out in striking contrast to the woeful and deplorable failure of our sanatoria, and, without a doubt, public favour has now turned from them to his treatment as giving the patient the best chance of recovery.

Anyone interested in the great question of fighting consumption should obtain and carefully peruse a copy of the important treatise on chest diseases, entitled:

The Cure of Consumption, Asthma, Chronic Bronchitis and Catarrh. By EDWIN W. ALABONE, M.D.Phil., D.Sc., ex-M.R.C.S.Eng., Lynton House, Highbury Quadrant, London, N. Illustrated by numerous Cases pronounced *Incurable* by the most eminent Physicians. 47th Edition. 16th Thousand. Price 2s 6d. Post Free.

Other Works by the Same Author:

Testimonies of Patients Price 1s.
With Comments on the Open-Air Treatment.

Infamous Conduct Price 6d.

How the Cure of Consumption is Suppressed Price 1s.

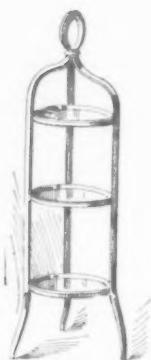
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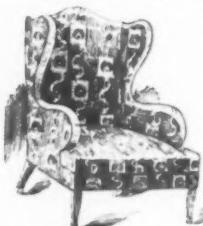
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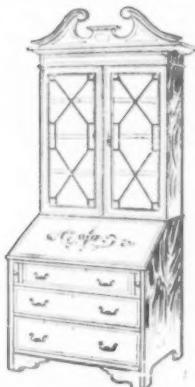
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YOUNG PEOPLE'S PAGES

in the hot glaring streets of London, or another great town, I fear you will not be able fully to realise what a fortnight in the clean, sweet country means. But it was such a precious delight to George that he determined to have it again. And all through the next winter he screwed and scraped, and saved every halfpenny he could, earning odd pence after school hours, and never buying sweets (or cigarettes, I guess). And by spring-time he had half a crown of the six necessary shillings for the holiday. Then came the doctor's orders for Willie, and the grim problem of how to find the four half-crowns. "After we'd talked it over a bit," remarked the mother to me, "George turned to Willie and said, 'Well, Will, you can have my half-crown, that'll pay for one week.'" I really could hardly reply because of the big lump that came in my throat, as I heard of George's high courage and unselfishness, and I should like to have shaken hands with him. For it was autumn then, and almost all the holiday children were in town again. George had been at home all the summer—because there wasn't time to earn the six shillings then—and had seen the country only in imagination. Wasn't that a Golden Nugget of Love to find unexpectedly? It made me glad. And you will surely agree that it was a little manifestation of the Christmas Spirit—Christ's Spirit of Love.

I must not spin out my message, but you will let me say that I hope very deeply that in our work together for Violet in 1911 we shall be more enthusiastic; and that all our everyday lives will be more sweetly fragrant because we have felt the Christmas Spirit, and try to carry it always with us.

A New Companion on Our Scheme

Here is a letter that will give you pleasure, as it gave to me. *Harold W. Naish* (aged 21), a new Companion, writes from Roniton:

"My DEAR ALISON.—I am very greatly interested in your Scheme about Violet, and have got a suggestion. You say that it will cost 5s. a week, that is, £13 a year to keep her in Canada. Now could not we Companions all promise to give so much each quarter or each year towards this amount? Of course some will be able to give more than others, but I think all of us could manage 1s. a year, and several 1s. a quarter, and no doubt we shall be able easily to raise the necessary 260 shillings per annum. I will give 5s. per quarter, the first instalment for which I enclose, and if you consider this a good idea will forward it every three months."

"As our Companionship grows, doubtless we shall be able to adopt one or two more little children; but I think it would be nice if, as each £13 is promised, you could let us know who are supporting each child, as I have an idea in my mind that we might write to the one we are supporting, if you are agreeable, and also send her a parcel at Xmas. However, let me know what you and the others think about it."

Harold's suggestions are manly and business-like, and he has proved his genuine interest in a practical manner. He and *Ivy Slesser*, whose letter you read last month, are, you see, thinking on similar lines. Probably other Companions will follow his example, and make definite promises. Or groups of Companions might undertake certain responsibilities. Will you please write me on these points?

You will also enjoy *Stewart Bergheim's* account of her Devonshire holiday. She says:

"I was staying near Ilfracombe, and in a tiny little seaside town from which we could go for lovely walks and drives into the beautiful country round. We were quite close to the famous 'shell beach,' where there is no shingle and no sand; the shore, which is a little bay, is composed of shells, finely powdered by the sea. Tropical shells are often found there, and the inhabitants of the country round steadfastly affirm that this is caused by the Gulf Stream which comes from the tropics, but I cannot vouch for their accuracy.

"Morte Point is a beautiful and most impressive headland. Its name will describe it almost better than I can; the rocks of which it is composed are gigantic and jagged, and altogether awful to look on, in the full sense of the word. To look at Morte Point from some way off in the evening is a gorgeous scene when the weather is fine. The Point is like a mountain, and, covered with purple heather, its beauty is indescribable, standing in contrast to the deep blue sea behind which the sun sets, and casts a glow over all the horizon: there is such a wonderful peacefulness in a Devonshire sunset, which is only broken or, one might more truly say, made more impressive by the low thunder of the sea as it breaks upon the rocks.

"One expedition I enjoyed very much indeed was a drive to Bull's Point Lighthouse. I had never been over one before, and as we had a very good guide, who explained all the mechanisms so clearly, it was exceedingly interesting. I wonder if you have ever been to Watersmeet? I have never seen such a veritable Paradise on earth in any other place. The heather and bracken-covered hills, which are over a thousand feet high, make two huge walls which shut in the river Lynn, which comes tumbling down to the sea, making beautiful little waterfalls. At one spot another river, I cannot remember its name, joins the Lynn, and at this place a perfect view is to be had.

"One day we went to Lee, a little village where fuchsias grow wild; the roads are lined with hedges of them. We passed in our drive the cottage where the Three Old Maids of Lee are said to have lived. It is a sweet little cottage, though I cannot say I should care to live there.

"I daresay you will be tired of this long letter, if I continue all about Devonshire. I thought that you might like to hear a little about that beautiful county, and also that some of your readers might too."

Indeed, I am longing to visit Devonshire and Cornwall; so many of my friends went this summer and have written of their glories.

Two Letter Prizes are given this month to these Companions, who, I think you will agree, deserve them.

Among the new members we have to welcome are *Betty Balfour* (age 11), of Half-way Tree, Jamaica. Isn't it a pictur-

THE QUIVER

esque name for a place? *Alice King* is not alone in our Companionship in that island now. Another Companion in the far-away lands is *Mrs. Annie Harmon* (age 22), Grand Bassa, Liberia. I am looking forward to having long letters from them soon. In a little note Betty tells me that she loves "reading, dolls and animals," and has a cat named Zoroaster, and two pet ducks, and that she would like "to give a little to help keep Violet." We should like to hear about life in Liberia, please, Mrs. Harmon.

Our New Competition

should please most of you. I have been asked numbers of times to have an

Original Story Competition

This season of long evenings, when we see fairy palaces in our roaring fires, and can

All young people are invited to become Companions in this Corner. Those desiring to join should fill in the coupon in the advertisement section, and send, with penny stamp for certificate, to ALISON, THE QUIVER, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.



SANTA CLAUS

By the Rev. J. D. JONES, M.A., B.D.

I THINK I can tell the name of the person you children think and talk most about during the days of December. Shall I guess? Well, Santa Claus! You begin to wonder what Santa Claus will bring when he visits your home on Christmas Eve. You begin to wonder what you will find in your stockings or on the table by your bedside when you wake up on Christmas morning. And possibly some of you, during the month, will take care to tell out loud what you would like to have, on the chance that Santa Claus may hear.

You would dearly like to see Santa Claus, wouldn't you? But he is a funny old gentleman, for he does not like to be seen, and he always likes to bring his presents *on the sly*, shall I say? I have known little children make up their minds to keep awake on Christmas Eve in order to see Santa Claus. The only result was that Santa Claus did not appear quite so soon. But as soon as ever the little eyes were fast closed in sleep in he came, and in the morning the little folk found his presents at the bedside.

dream dreams in the gloaming, is perhaps the best opportunity for this. So I shall look for many entries. Will you send me stories—ghost stories, fairy stories, stories of adventure, or romance—anything of *your own make up* that is pure-spirited? The length must not exceed 200 words. Write on one side only of your paper, and be sure to put name, age and address on the top of the first sheet. January 31st is the last day I can receive entries from Homeland Companions, but a month's extension, till March 3rd, is allowed to foreign members.

And now, with my love,
Believe me to be,
Your friend,

Alison.

Now, who is Santa Claus? I have heard some precise and unromantic persons declare that there is no Santa Claus at all. I have heard others say that Santa Claus is only another name for father and mother. I have heard some little children guess that Santa Claus is Jesus Christ Himself. Well, perhaps they are all of them more or less right.

But there really was a Santa Claus once upon a time; for Santa Claus is only the American way of saying St. Nicholas. Now this St. Nicholas lived a very, very long time ago—over 1,500 years ago. He was born at Panthera, a city in far-off Asia Minor, and his parents were wealthy people. Very early Nicholas gave his heart to Jesus Christ, and in course of time he became a Christian minister. And this was Nicholas' chief characteristic—he had a most tender heart, so that he could not see anyone in poverty or distress without wishing to help them. It happened that his parents died while he was still a young man, and Nicholas became heir to all their vast riches. And this is what Nicholas did with his wealth: he used it, not to buy things for himself, but to do

YOUNG PEOPLES PAGES

good to others. I read of a young man in England here not very long ago, who became heir to a great fortune of a quarter of a million of money, and in four or five years he had squandered and wasted it all on his own foolish and wicked pleasures. But Nicholas lived like a poor man, and spent his money in giving pleasure to other people. He was *specially good to children*. He loved the little children of his town, and was always secretly giving presents to them.

Let me tell you one story about him. There was a nobleman in the city where he lived who had three little daughters. And this nobleman was poor—so poor that he did not know how to get bread for his children. It seemed as if they must starve, or else the father must sell his daughters into slavery in order to keep them alive. Somehow or other Nicholas got to know of this, and one night he stole to the nobleman's house after dark, resolved to help them if he could. He took a bag of gold with him. He wondered how he should get it into the house without being seen. Just then the moon broke through and showed him an open window, and he flung his bag of gold through it and it fell at the father's feet. The next night he came again and threw in another bagful. A third night he came (for his idea was to provide a bagful of gold for each child), hoping to get away undetected as before. But the father was on the watch this time, and when Nicholas drew near he rushed out and seized him by the skirt of his robe, and said, "O Nicholas, servant of God, why seek to hide thyself?" and he kissed his feet and his hands.

Many other beautiful and kindly deeds Nicholas did, of which I have no time to tell you now. And they say that the old saint still goes about doing good, and that on Christmas Eve, when their eyes are fast closed in sleep, he brings presents to all good boys and girls. Well, it is very nice to be remembered by Santa Claus, and when Christmas Eve comes I hope he will remember every one of you.

But I can tell you of, at any rate, one thing which is better than receiving a visit from Santa Claus, and that is being a Santa Claus yourself. They say of gruff old Dr. Johnson that for all his rough ways he had a wonderfully tender heart. And this was one of the ways in which his tenderness showed itself. If on his way home from his club at night he found sleeping in a doorway some poor street arab (and this often happened) the old Doctor used to delight in slipping a penny into his hand, so that the poor starved lad might be able to buy something to eat when he awoke. Dr. Johnson found his chief joy in playing the part of Santa Claus to the outcast children of London. And there are poor and sad and needy children, and grown-up men and women too, all about us. Let us all play St. Nicholas this coming Christmas! Let us do what we can to minister to them. Then what a happy Christmas we shall have! For the best way of making Christmas happy for ourselves is to make it happy for others. Remember the word of the Lord Jesus—how He Himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."



THE CRUTCH-AND-KINDNESS LEAGUE

By the Rev. J. REID HOWATT

Christmas and the Bairns

"There came a little Child to earth
Long ago;
And the angels of God proclaimed His birth
High and low."

THERE is something so kind about this! God would begin with the littlest and weakest! Sometimes you have felt quite left out in the cold, and though you tried to think it must be all right, yet you could not help feeling a little heart-sore. Perhaps it

was when you went to church and the preacher had much to say to the grown-ups, but never a word for you, and you felt rather out of it. Or perhaps it was a big gathering about something or other, and you were brought to it, but no notice was taken of you, and you fancied you were rather in the way. Well, this cannot always be helped; the big work of the world has to go on, and

THE QUIVER

your head isn't yet the size to be able to give much advice, or your hands strong enough to give much help ; by and by you may be able to give both, and be very much wanted, but meantime you must wait and grow.

But doesn't it make it all the kinder of God, and so like Him, to begin with the littlest ? People were expecting Him, and expecting Him to come as a great King, with the crown on His head and armies on armies behind Him with banners. Instead of which He came "a little Child," and so poor !—with only a manger for His cradle. It was His way for getting close, close to everybody. For if He had come mighty and great it would have been hard for poor folk and children to get near Him ; but though the poor cannot always become rich, the richest in the world, if he chooses, can always become poor, and find Jesus ; and if we get close to Him when we are children we shall not fail to keep close beside Him when we have grown men and women.

So kindness is the chief thing that should be in our hearts too, always and always, but very specially at Christmas time. If you had been near the manger in the olden day, wouldn't you have done a kindness to the Babe if you could ? You would have done your best to have made His bed a little softer, and the things round about Him a little brighter and better. Yes, and you can do all this now, for Jesus comes again in every one who needs us and can be helped by us.

Have you heard of St. Christopher ? Near where he lived was a river, and people had to cross and recross it where the water was shallowest, but sometimes a flood would suddenly rush down and sweep many away. But this man was kind, and pitied folks, so instead of going about talking of what other people ought to do, he just asked himself what *he* could do to help those who had to cross the river. This is always the best way—to begin with ourselves and find out what *we* can do, and are willing to try. Now this man was strong, and he made up his mind to use his strength for weak folk. So he

kept his eye on the river and on those who had to pass over, and if he saw that a flood was coming when some weak man or woman or child had to get over, he would himself take that one by the hand, or carry him on his broad shoulders and bear him across.

One dark and stormy night, when the waters were great and wild, there came a poor, frail child to the river's edge and pleaded with Christopher to carry him over. The strong man carried him though it was so dangerous; and as he passed through the waters his burden grew heavier and heavier, till Christopher lost his footing and got out of his depth ; but instead of sinking he found himself held up and brought safely to the shore. Then, the legend tells us, he found it was not a poor child he had been carrying, but Jesus Himself. And so he came to be called Christopher, which means "The Christ-bearer."

Something like this always comes of kindness done for the sake of the "little Child" Who came to earth long ago. When we do what we can for others, when we help the poor, give bread to the hungry or a bit of comfort to those who are cold and shivering, then it is a kindness done to Jesus, for it is He Himself Who comes in the likeness of the poor, weak one who needs us.

I am sure you will do what you can to show kindness to Jesus in this way ; but I should like to put in a word for the poor, crippled children of London. There are hundreds on hundreds of them in the care of the Crutch-and-Kindness League, and unless some kind-hearted souls think of them, and send something nice, their Christmas will be a very dull one, and this will make the heart of Jesus so sad. If, then, you know any poor cripple yourself, be kind to that one, but if you don't happen to know any, send what you can for them of food, clothing or money, and send in time for Christmas Day, to Sir John Kirk, Director and Secretary, Ragged School Union, 32, John Street, Theobald's Road, London, W.C., and he will see that the poor little mites get it.

(The usual list of new members of the League is held over this month.)



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Every girl, whatever her position in life, should be an expert with the needle. Because there is a danger of modern girls neglecting Plain Needlework I have asked Mrs. Townend to give a practical course of lessons from the very start. May I ask the co-operation of parents and teachers in this effort?

PLAIN NEEDLEWORK FOR GIRLS

By Mrs. F. B. TOWNEND

II.—SEWING

IT is not often that you hear this particular stitch spoken of as "sewing"; it is more often called "sewing over and over," "over-sewing" or "seaming," and they are all quite right, in a way. If two pieces are being joined together by this stitch it is called "sewing"; if used in conjunction with another stitch, such as "felling," then it is called "seaming."

Sewing is the joining of two sides together by an over and over stitch, the raw edges of the material being turned in, or left open if selvedges, which you would do if joining to make the material wider, as you will sometimes see in the sides of nightdresses. The selvedges are also left in the making of pillow-cases, but in the case of bands the edges would be turned in.

This is quite one of the strongest stitches used in plain needlework, and is always worked on the right side of the material. In this stitch, perhaps more than in any other, must the fixing be most carefully attended to, the edges being placed most evenly together, the turning in very regular and even, almost, if not quite, to a thread, and the tacking stitches very firm, and not too far down from the edge.

If you are going to learn the stitch for the first time, you will find it easier and better in every way not to begin by joining selvedges together, for they are generally very hard, and the threads uneven. You will find that the greatest success to be attained in the working of this stitch will depend upon the way in which the work is held. Remember not to let your hands and fingers be in a strained position, sit up-

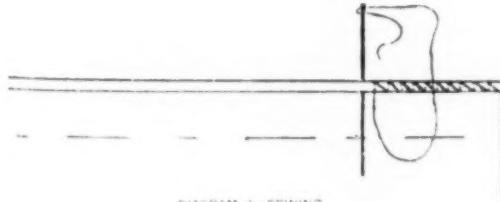
right, naturally and comfortably, and don't try to keep your right elbow close to your side.

Sewing is worked from right to left, and to prevent the work from dragging, hold as much of the material to be sewn as you can conveniently arrange, loosely, in the fork of the left hand which is formed by the thumb and the first finger.

The work is placed along the first finger of the left hand, so that the last stitch with the cotton coming from it is half-way between the finger-nail and the first joint; place the left-hand thumb against the work at this spot. The work will go round the end of the finger, *not* over it, and be kept in place with the help of the middle finger. You may find all this a little difficult and awkward at first, but you must persevere, and the difficulties will soon vanish.

The work should be held at a fairly moderate distance in front of the chest, the right elbow being kept well up from the side; curve the right hand with the needle and cotton round towards the work on the left forefinger.

To commence, catch up the very edge of the fold nearest the thumb, and see that the needle points towards your chest, over the thumb-nail; draw the needle through till a short end of the cotton remains, then place this, with the help of the needle, along the fold from right to left; then make the next stitch, taking up on the needle the extreme edge of both folds (or both selvedges) and sew *over* the end of cotton. Be very careful to have the end of cotton along the folds and not tucked through.



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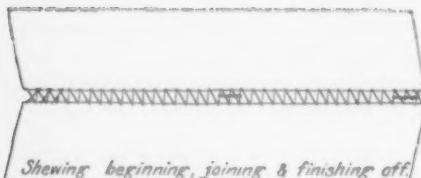


DIAGRAM II.

to the wrong side between the two pieces. These stitches must always be placed close together as in diagram I., one thread only of the material being between each one. If placed farther apart you will find that the work will pucker. Keep the stitches quite regular—one thread deep, and one thread between—do not have some of them two threads deep and think it will not matter—it will—for it will help to make you careless, besides spoiling the appearance of your work.

If you have to make a join with the cotton, cut—do not break—the cotton, leaving a small piece; then with the needle unpick half a stitch so as to bring the end out between the folds; then begin as before, placing both ends along the folds and sew over them. By this method of joining you will have two perfect stitches, side by side. See diagram II.

A neat finish is made by sewing back for three or four stitches, forming little crosses, or you can turn the work round and sew back; this is much stronger, nicer and neater than finishing off by making two or three stitches on the top of one another, as is sometimes seen.

Specimens should be sent to Mrs. Townsend, THE QUIVER Office, *La Belle Sauvage*, London, E.C., with name, address, and age attached. A handsome book prize will be awarded to the best specimen.



THE CHRISTMAS "CASSELL'S."

THE Christmas Number of "Cassell's Magazine" contains, as its special Art feature, six humorous drawings, reproduced in colours, by such well-known artists as John Hassall, Lawson Wood, Cecil Aldin, Harry Rowntree, and Ernest Aris. The subjects chosen are deliciously funny, and the three-colour reproduction brings out every value possessed by the original drawings. The number also contains a seasonable Art feature entitled "The Empire's Christmas," showing how England's festival is spent in various parts of the world, and over thirty full-page and numerous smaller drawings by the most popular black-and-white artists of the day.

Among the literary contents, which outrival even those of previous Christmas Numbers, the delightful contributions of Pett Ridge, Warwick Deeping, Marjorie Bowen, Keble Howard, Mrs. George de Horne Vaizey, J. J. Bell, Orme Agnes, Norman Gale, Walter Wood, and Lillias Campbell Davidson are specially worthy of note.

In every sense the Christmas "Cassell's" upholds its reputation, not only by the variety of its pictorial contents, but also by its healthy vigorous fiction and the entire absence of vulgarity from its humour.

When you have finished the sewing take out the tacking threads, open out the work, and well flatten down the stitches. In fastening up the ends of a band when the corner is reached the needle may be slipped between the folds and the cotton cut off. You will find this much better than breaking off the cotton close.

The difficulties to be met with in this stitch are:—

(i.) Puckering, which may be caused by not holding the work properly, by drawing the cotton too tightly, and by making a slanting stitch instead of a straight one.

(ii.) Putting the stitches too close together and so spoiling the shape of the stitch which ought to be slanting on the top edges, or right side of the work, and straight on the wrong side.

(iii.) Slip-stitches, which are caused by sometimes taking up only one fold, or edge, instead of both.

(iv.) Forgetting to flatten out the work when finished.

Our next lesson will be on "Seaming" and the "Cutting out and Making-up of a Cottage Pinafore."

I want you now to work me six inches of sewing; do not use the selvedge sides. Turn in the edges, which should not be more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch wide, tack firmly and evenly together, and begin with blue cotton, sew for three inches, then work with pink cotton, so as to well show the join. Take out the tacking thread, open, and flatten out well.

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POINTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SERIES

DECEMBER 4th. PETER'S DENIAL

Matthew xxvi. 31-35, 69-75

POINTS TO EMPHASISE. (1) The disciple's confidence and the Master's prediction. (2) The accusation and the denial. (3) The dawn of remorse.

The Test of Discipleship

PETER never doubted his loyalty to his Master, but when the hour of trial came he repudiated all connection with the Man who was on trial for His life. It was only a temporary lapse. Peter's subsequent life and his martyr's death proved the depth of his love.

Christian history is rich in illustrations of allegiance to Jesus Christ in face of torture and death. Speaking at the recent Keswick Convention, the Rev. J. Goforth, a missionary from China, told this story: "In North China a Christian father and son were taken by the Boxers, who dug a hole and said, 'Old man, if you do not recant, we will bury you alive in this hole.' He replied, 'I will follow my Master. He has loved me with an everlasting love, and I will not go back on Him now.' They buried him up to the chin and said, 'There is just one more chance; a few more shovelfuls will end it.' The old man said, 'I do not fear; my Jesus will receive me.' And he was soon smothered. His little son, fourteen years of age, stood weeping. 'You see what has happened to your father,' they said to him. 'Do not be so foolish; come into the temple and bow down before the idols.' But the boy loved his Saviour, and he said, 'Do you suppose I would go back on my blessed Saviour like that? No, I want to go to Him and my father.' They buried him up to the chin and then said, 'Remember, it is only a few more shovelfuls.' 'I don't care; I will soon be with my God.' And he, too, was smothered. That father and son were willing to sacrifice all for Jesus Christ."

DECEMBER 11th. THE CRUCIFIXION

Matthew xxvii. 15-50

POINTS TO EMPHASISE. (1) The choice of the populace—Barabbas before Christ. (2) The mocking and insulting soldiers. (3) The agony on the cross.

More than a Friend

THOUSANDS of hearts in all ages have been melted by the contemplation of the sufferings of Jesus Christ on their behalf. "Greater

love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." But Christ laid down His life for His enemies.

In a burying-ground in one of the southern States of America a man was seen decking a soldier's grave with flowers, and a stranger who stood by asked in a tone of sympathy, "Is your son buried there?" "No," was the reply. "Your brother?" "No." "Some other relative?" "No." "Whose memory, then, may I venture to ask, do you so sacredly and tenderly cherish?" Pausing a moment, to overcome his emotion, he replied, "When the war broke out I was drafted for the army; and as I was unable to procure a substitute, I prepared to go. Just as I was leaving home to report myself for duty, a young man whom I knew came to me and said, 'You have a large family whom your wife cannot support when you are away. I am a single man and have no one depending on me—I will go for you.' He went. In the battle of Chickamauga the poor fellow was dangerously wounded, and was taken to the hospital. After a lingering illness, he died and was buried here. Ever since his death I have wished to visit this place, and having saved sufficient funds, I arrived yesterday and to-day have found his grave." The touching story concluded, he planted the rest of the flowers. Then taking a rude board, he inserted it at the foot of the grave. On it were written those simple words, and no more—"He died for me."

DECEMBER 18th. THE RESURRECTION

Matthew xxviii. 1-20

POINTS TO EMPHASISE. (1) The women at the sepulchre. (2) The empty tomb. (3) The risen Saviour and His message to His disciples. (4) Christ's meeting with His disciples and His farewell command.

He Lives to Save

A LADY missionary travelling in the hills near Mussooree, North India, stopped to speak with a gang of coolie women working on the road. Among them was a woman of considerable intelligence, who spoke Urdu fairly well. Her husband was a Tibetan, who had in some way obtained a Gospel in the Tibetan language. The woman was familiar with the story of Christ, but she refused to mention His crucifixion and death. "It was too awful," she said; "I cannot bring myself to read it." The lady asked,

THE QUIVER

"Did you think His death was the end of all? Did you not see that He died for your sins and mine, and then rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, where He now lives to intercede for us?" A wave of delight swept over her face, as she replied, "I am so glad you have told me. I see it all. It must be true. He lives to save."

My Brother's Keeper

Dr. Egerton R. Young, the "Missionary Pathfinder of Canada," gives the following experience in his missionary life among the Indians of British America. "Missionary," said a savage, stalwart-looking Indian, "grey hairs here and grandchildren in the wigwam tell me that I am getting to be an old man; and yet I have never heard such things as you have told us to day. I am so glad I did not die before I heard this wonderful story. Stay as long as you can, missionary: tell us much of these things; and when you have to go away, come back sooon." He turned as though he would go back to his place and sit down, but he only went a step or two ere he turned round and said, "Missionary, may I say more?" "Talk on," the missionary replied, "I am here to listen." "You said just now, 'Our Father.'" "Yes, I did say, 'Our Father.'" "That is very new and sweet to us," said the Indian; "we never thought of the Great Spirit as Father. We heard Him in the thunder and saw Him in the lightning, the tempest and the blizzard, and we were afraid. So, when you tell us of the Great Spirit as Father—that is very beautiful to us." Lifting up his eyes, he said, "May I say more?" "Yes," answered the missionary, "say on." "You say, 'Our Father.' Does it mean He is my Father—poor Indian's Father?" "Yes, oh, yes," answered Dr. Young. "Missionary's Father—and Indian's Father, too?" he repeated. "Yes, that is true." "Then we are brothers!" he almost shouted out. "Yes, we are brothers." After a moment's silence, he asked his final question, "Missionary, I do not want to be rude, but why has my white brother been so long time in coming with that Great Book and its wonderful story?"

Many have asked the same question as that poor Indian. The farewell command of Christ to His little band of followers was to make disciples of all the nations, yet there are still portions of the earth where the people have never heard the name of the Saviour. But while that is true, it ought to be remembered that during the past century a tremendous advance has been made in sending the Gospel to the dark

quarters of the earth. A recent statement says that in 1908 there were 338 societies in the world appointing and sending forth missionaries, with 450 auxiliary societies, whose united incomes amount to more than five million pounds. More than 35,000 stations and sub-stations were occupied; 1,301,506 pupils were being educated in mission schools and colleges; and 7,500,000 "treatments" were registered at the 1,574 mission hospitals and dispensaries. The present Christian population of non-Christian origin due to Protestant missionary labour is estimated to exceed 12,000,000; while those won by the efforts of the Roman Catholic and Russian Orthodox missions are put at rather more than half that number. The number of Christian adherents of Protestant missionary societies is given as 5,281,871.

DECEMBER 25th. CHRISTMAS LESSON

Luke ii. 6-20

POINTS TO EMPHASISE. (1) The visit of the angels to the shepherds. (2) The shepherds and the Babe.

The Saviour of the World

THERE IS no more beautiful story in the whole range of literature than that contained in this lesson. Jesus Christ came from heaven to live among men and to open up for them a way to the Father. Not to some lordly mansion did He come, but in the form of a helpless Babe He came to a humble home, that even the poorest might feel that they had a share in this great gift of God.

Ralph Connor, in one of his beautiful stories, describes a Christmas Eve in a lumber camp, picturing with inimitable power and effect the scene in the forest hut as the preacher tells, in his own simple and vivid language, the wonderful story of the birth of Christ. Hearts are touched and tears come to most of the eyes. Then the minister goes on to say that no man can truly fulfil his manhood unless he yields his life to the control of this Saviour, who is able to give strength and victory in the hour of temptation. As the preacher is driving away, he is stopped by one of the oldest of the lumbermen who, in earnest tones, asks whether Christ is really able to do all that has been said. The minister assures him that such is, indeed, the case. The old man resolves to put the matter to the test. "But if He can't," he says, "it's hell for me." "If He cannot," solemnly adds the preacher, "it's hell for all of us."

But Christ has never yet failed: that is the unanimous testimony of all who have surrendered to Him.

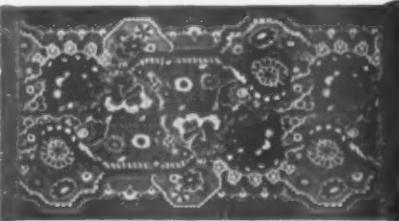
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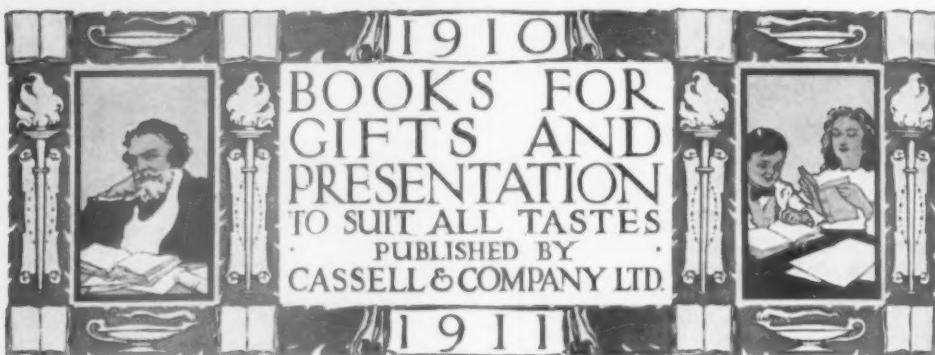
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We shall publish three more sets—that is, one each in January, February and March numbers—and the first prize will be awarded for the correct list of solutions sent in.

In the event of no reader giving all the correct solutions, the first prize will be awarded for the list containing the greatest number correct, while should we receive more than one list absolutely correct, a further competition or competitions of a nature which the adjudicator may deem the most advisable to determine the winner will be arranged. The other prizes will be awarded in order of merit, or, in the event of a number of readers tying for second place, the second, third and fourth prizes will be pooled and divided in equal shares among them.

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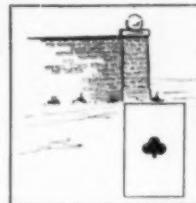
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By JOHN WESTLOCK

THERE are some stories of which one quickly tires : they are those which excite considerable expectations of happiness and success, and which end in disappointment and failure. There are others which are interesting from first to last, beginning well, going on well, and ending well : these are the stories worth telling.

You know how it is when a man has had his own life, or the life of one nearer and dearer than self, saved to him by some special remedy ? His heart is so full of gratitude that he feels he must tell somebody else about it. He doesn't hug to himself the grudging assurance that "good news will keep," but rather feels that if he did not tell out his glad tidings for the benefit of other sufferers—then the very stones would cry shame upon him.

This, at least, is the spirit constantly evidenced in the letters which arrive by each successive day's post at the shop of Mr. I. W. Nicholl, Pharmaceutical Chemist, 27, High Street, Belfast, whose wonderful cure for epilepsy has now become known all over the world.

What Ozerine has done for Epileptics.

It has never been a case of a solitary cure here and there among innumerable cases of failure. The cures predominate to so remarkable an extent that, although it would be both arrogant and unreasonable to declare Ozerine an absolutely infallible cure in every case, yet one is justified in retreating only a very little way from that emphatic statement, because there are so very few who, after giving the remedy a fair and reasonable trial, do not receive incalculable benefit ; while, in the great majority of cases, the distressing fits cease entirely from the day of beginning the treatment.

In cases that have been particularly troublesome or of exceptionally long standing, the patient, once thoroughly cured, gets to feel himself perfectly safe so long as he has a dose or two of Ozerine in the house. The thought that the remedy is close at hand acts, apparently, as a charm against the oncoming of any of the well-known premonitory symptoms, and not infrequently a man will write and say, "I would sooner go without food than be without a bottle of Ozerine in the house."

In the great majority of cases the requests for fresh supplies of the remedy come from fathers or mothers who have watched its effect upon their children, and one is constantly reminded of the appalling anxiety which weighs upon the mind of a parent whose child is so terribly afflicted as to be liable at any hour to fall a victim to an epileptic fit. It is to such as these that the first bottle of Ozerine—however the remedy may have been introduced, whether by a printed advertisement or, as is more frequently the case, by the strong recommendation of a friend—comes as a perfect God-send, an angel of deliverance.

Note for a moment the real thankfulness apparent in every line of these few cuttings from letters recently received from parents :

"It is eighteen months since my son began to take Ozerine, and he has not had a single fit since.

He was a great sufferer for three years, and we were despairing of a cure for him when I heard of your medicine. I am so thankful to know of it."

"This wonderful and blessed remedy has cured my son. It is marvellous, and I am constantly recommending it to sufferers as a real God-send. My son's case was apparently hopeless, for he suffered for nearly twenty years. Believe me most grateful for his wonderful cure."

These testimonies are repeated again and again in letters that come from all over the civilised world. In quoting one letter hundreds are quoted, the testimony being so nearly identical as to make it appear almost as if one were repeating messages with the mechanical accuracy of a phonograph.

Again, one notices how very many letters come from husbands acknowledging the benefits which have resulted in their homes since Ozerine became known :

"I don't know how grateful I am to you. It takes such a dreadful load off my mind to think that my wife is able to go about again in good spirits and good health. Your medicine is the best we ever heard of."

"Everything you promised for your medicine it has faithfully wrought, and I am indeed thankful. My wife is perfectly cured. There has been no sign of a fit for more than fifteen months."

Finally, we will print two or three extracts from letters in which the writers strike the actual personal note, telling out clearly and simply what Ozerine has done for their very own selves :

"I went to eight different doctors, and got no benefit at all from either of them ; but I have had not the slightest symptom since I began to take Ozerine. I am confident that your medicine is the only cure for this awful complaint, for I was a constant sufferer, sometimes having several fits in one day, and being never free from dread."

"Oh ! the medicine is doing me so much good. I can again go out and about and enjoy myself every day of my life, and my general health is excellent compared with what it was."

"I would not leave off taking Ozerine for the world ; for I have not had a sign of a fit since after I had taken a few bottles of this wonderful remedy."

"Please send me on a 11s. bottle. Your medicine has done me so much good that I am now able to work again as usual. I had been idle, through suffering, for two years, and am indeed grateful to be once more fit for work."

One does not need to ask if these letters are genuine, for the day has not yet come when a letter written direct from the heart fails to bring its message home to other hearts.

Let this page of simple, straightforward testimony convince you that Ozerine does exactly what it professes to do—*Cures Fits*.

Ozerine is sent to all parts of the world, post free in U.K. for 4s. 6d. and 11s. per bottle. Special rates for the Colonies, America, and foreign countries. Also, any sufferer applying for a Free Sample Bottle will be gladly supplied by Mr. I. W. Nicholl, Pharmaceutical Chemist, 27, High Street, Belfast.

Conversation Corner

Conducted by THE EDITOR



The Spirit of Christmastide

TO our ever-increasing circle of readers I send forth this Christmas Number with the heartiest good wishes for "A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year." By common consent, Christmas has been made to stand not merely for joyfulness and mirth, but for warm-hearted generosity and unselfish giving. Joy has a distinct office to fulfil in our lives; we too often forget the command to "be joyful in the Lord." At Christmastide by universal agreement we admit the claims of gladness and mirth. And really, to the spirit of joyfulness, unselfish generosity is closely allied. We shall be happy ourselves in proportion to the way we make others happy.

Now I am aware there is nothing particularly original or wise about these remarks; I use them because just now I am burdened with the cry of so many deserving charities to whom the passing year has not been overkind, and who now are anxiously looking for the open-handed support of my readers. May I mention a few cases?



The League of Loving Hearts

FIRST of all I must plead the cause of the little society which is our own peculiar QUIVER property—The League of Loving Hearts. One shilling means help to each of ten thoroughly good national institutions. It is a fitting start for any charitable scheme. Is there a home that can deny itself the pleasure of being represented in the League's distribution at the end of the year? I hope during the next few weeks to receive hundreds of shillings from new and old members. Shall yours be among the number? Perhaps you have put off sending all the days of this year. If so, do not let the old year pass without joining in the good work of the League.

East London Hospital for Children

IT is with considerable regret that I notice that the East London Hospital for Children has an old-time deficit of £1,286 15s. 4d. to wipe out. This Hospital is doing splendid work in providing medical and surgical treatment for poor children and women in the poorest part of the Empire. Their Convalescent Home at Bognor, too, supplies in thousands of cases just the help that is the making of a life. Who among my readers is able to endow a cot? £50 per annum is necessary for this. Few can have the great joy of such service, but I shall be delighted to receive smaller amounts for the upkeep of this deserving Hospital.



The Friend of Waifs and Strays

NO excuse is necessary once again for appealing for Dr. Barnardo's Homes. Says the Very Rev. H. M. Butler, D.D., Master of Trinity: "The work of Dr. Barnardo's Homes is really one of the most blessed that modern England has seen. We ought to be thankful that our generation has seen this astonishingly audacious venture of faith and the vast blessings that have resulted." Dr. Barnardo's is full of commitments for the New Year—the new Boys' Garden City, the emigration schemes, the Girls' Village Homes—and all the time that veritable army of woebegone homeless little stragglers coming into the ever-open doors. I appeal most earnestly for this great, national institution, and shall be only too glad to receive and forward any amounts readers may send.



Miss Weston's Sailors

POSSIBLY there are many of my readers unable to spare a money gift who will be glad to know that they can help in other ways. Will you help Miss Weston by



"No; are you really three stone lighter?"

"Yes, all thanks to Antipon."

"It's marvellous! And you've lost all that fullness about the cheeks, chin and throat! Oh, I shall certainly go in for Antipon now."

**ARE YOU AWARE THAT
YOU MAY, ON YOUR
CHRISTMAS DINNER TABLE,
place the same GINGER ALE
as went "With Scott to
the Antarctic"?**

Grattan's Belfast
WORLD-FAMED
**TABLE
WATERS**
INCLUDE
Their Original
BELFAST
Ginger Ale

TESTIMONIAL.
An Appreciation
by Telegram.

CARDIFF, 10.54 P.M., 11th June, 1910.
"Officers of *Terra Nova* find your
Ginger Ale so excellent have consumed
it all. Please despatch further supply
quickest route."

GRATTAN & COMPANY, LTD., BELFAST.

KEEP BABY'S HEAD CLEAN



With

CUTICURA SOAP

Frequent shampoos with Cuticura Soap, assisted when necessary by gentle anointings with Cuticura Ointment, afford the purest, sweetest and most economical method of freeing the scalp of infants and children from minor eruptions, itchings and scalings and of establishing permanent hair health. For preserving, purifying and beautifying the skin, from infancy to age, Cuticura Soap and Ointment are unsurpassed.

Sold throughout the world. Deposits: London, 27, Charterhouse Sq.; Paris, 10, Rue de la Chaumière d'Antin; Australia, R. Towns & Co., Sydney, India, H. K. Paul, Calcutta; China, Hong Kong Drug Co.; Japan, Maruya, Ltd., Tokio; So. Africa, Lennon, Ltd., Cape Town, etc.; U. S. A., Potter Drug & Chem. Corp., Sole Proprietors, 133 Columbus Ave., New York, N.Y. 32-page "Cuticura Book," post-free, giving description, treatment and cure of skin afflictions.

CONVERSATION CORNER

sending Christmas Presents for sailors, their wives and children? Useful and fancy articles, such as writing-cases, photo-frames, shawls, frocks, work-baskets, story-books, etc., will be heartily welcomed by Miss Weston at The Royal Sailors' Rest, Portsmouth, or Devonport. They should be sent early in December, carriage paid.



For Invalid and Crippled Children

I HAVE before referred to the good work carried on by the Invalid Children's Aid Association. It stands on a somewhat different basis to most charities. It is, firstly, essentially non-pauperising—parents are expected to do the best for their children by contributing towards the expenses; and secondly, the Association's efforts do not stop with the return of the child from a short country holiday. Once on the books, the child, as far as possible, is never lost sight of. Permanent, efficient work is aimed at and accomplished. I am sure readers will be generous in their support of an institution which is trying to save the Empire's children.



"The Modern Maiden"—A Rejoinder

ONE of my readers sends me a rejoinder to the article on "The Modern Maiden and the Girl of Fifty Years Ago," which appeared in my October number. Now I should be the first to admit that there are two sides to the question. Whilst I unhesitatingly believe that girls of the present age are better off than their grandmothers, there are certainly disadvantages. My correspondent shall speak for herself: "Both the father and mother of the present writer had a large number of sisters (seven on each side), who were girls in the early days of the reign of Queen Victoria. They did not feed cows or pigs, and they did not sell bonnets; but, speaking generally, they were capable women, able to fill their place in life quite as efficiently as any modern young woman. There were good musicians and artists among them; and a habit of concentration on the reading of solid books was to some a resource which does seem to be neglected in the case of many of the girls of to-day, and this to the great detriment of the present-day damsel. For it must be remembered that not every modern girl earns her own living or works out schemes for the welfare of the poor. Surely there are numbers of girls growing up around us to whom perfection in playing games is the aim and object of life. To play well at tennis,

golf or croquet out of doors, and at bridge or a jig-saw puzzle indoors, appears to fulfil their proudest ambition. All would agree that as a recreation healthy outdoor exercise is much to be recommended, but some of these girls appear to make it the one business of life; and can it be argued that as a preparation for middle life or later years skill at such games is really better, or even as good as, the habit of application to 'accomplishments,' useful reading or needlework, inculcated in our grandmothers and great aunts?

"What the present age gains in its love of fresh air and exercise it seems to lose in the ceaseless activity and restless pursuit of amusement and change which has seized on all classes and all ages, and which too often ends in a nervous breakdown."



A New Household Guide

"THE thrifty woman's common-sense book" is a fitting description of the new "Cassell's Household Guide," now being issued in fortnightly parts. The aim has been to gather together all the loose threads of information regarding the household as it concerns wife, mother, home-worker, and child, and to present them in easy compass in a readily accessible form. That this has been accomplished, and in the most attractive way, will be evident both to those who casually glance at it and those who carefully study and follow this valuable Home Guide.



The Christmas "Little Folks"

THE Christmas Number of *Little Folks* is remarkable for the large number of full-page colour pictures it contains by John Hassall, Frank Hart, Mabel Lucie Attwell and other favourite artists; its other contents include a hitherto unpublished fairy tale by Hans Christian Andersen, and the first instalments of two splendid new serials, "Mystery Manor," by Ralph Simmonds—author of "The Buccaneers of Swan Lake," the most popular serial which has ever appeared in *Little Folks*—and "The Quest of the Grey Man," by Lilian F. Wevill, one of the most interesting writers of tales for girls. In addition, there are a great many excellent stories by all the best writers for children.

The Editor



REAL IRISH LINEN HANKERCHIEFS
With Embroidered Initials or Monograms, or
CHOICE IRISH LACE AND DAMASK.
For Illustrations thereof get a Christmas List from
MURPHY & ORR, IRISH LINEN & LACE HOUSE, BELFAST.

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500 Rooms.
Central for Business or Pleasure, near chief Shops & Theatres. Room, Table d'Hôte Breakfast and Attendant, from 5/-

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Real Kid, in Black, White, and all colours.
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4 buttons, 2/- per pair.
Ladies' Strong Pique Sewn Kid Gloves in Black, White, Mole, Tans, Beavers, Greys or Browns, with Self-braid Points, 4 buttons 2/- per pair.
Ladies' button Suede Gloves, in Black, White, and colours. Special Value, 4 buttons, 2/- per pair.
Ladies' Long White or Cream Glace Gloves, 12/- Mousseline, 2/- per pair
15/- ditto 3/-
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P.O. payable to the London Glove Co., at G.P.O.
Write for New Detailed and Illustrated Price List of all Departments free by post.

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is the first payment you are required to make under the Brinsmead instalment system—the remainder in monthly or quarterly payments, spread over 1, 2, or 3 years, as you desire. To buy a cheap foreign make of piano when for Five Pounds you can possess a piano that will last your own—and your children's—lifetime, is short-sighted policy. Consider the high reputation of a

Brinsmead Piano

and consider that each instalment paid is money invested in a piano of British manufacture with the reputation of a world-famous firm behind it.

"BRINSMEAD" stands not only for a Piano, but for the Finest Piano, for unsurpassed brilliancy of tone, for lightness of touch, for quality, volume, and sweetness of its music, and for the strength and perfect workmanship of the craftsmanship that has made "BRINSMEAD" a standard of excellence among amateurs and professionals throughout the world since the days when William IV. was King.

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Visit our Showrooms and SEE the Models.

John Brinsmead & Sons,
LIMITED,

18-22, WIGMORE STREET, W.

A Silent Enemy and a Never-Failing Friend

By RICHARD SCOTT

"FIRE! Fire!"

The hoarse cry rang out through the silence of the night, and for a few minutes the very darkness seemed tense with horror, a horror that could be felt. Then after the silence succeeded a clamour equally terrible, and men and women, as they dressed hurriedly, looked with white strained faces at each other, half afraid to trust themselves to speech. The brazen fire-bell bayed defiance to the monster whose devouring tongues leapt greedily onwards, licking up everything within reach, there was the clatter of hastily shod feet speeding down the street, then the jingle of bells as the fire engine sped on its way.

But already the mischief was too far advanced for much to be done. The quaint old house with its timbered roof, its oak panelling and fine staircase was doomed almost from the start. As soon as the flames obtained a headway it was impossible to save the building itself. The only thing to be done was to keep the fire from spreading to the adjoining and adjacent houses, which being of more modern type, were, perhaps, in less danger. The firemen worked like Trojans, and willing helpers handed up pails of water or assisted with hydrant and hose pipe. Even women took their turn and pumped water for the men folk, whilst the boys of a neighbouring college turned themselves into a brigade of assistants, their knowledge of school fire-drill for once being of real service.

The owner of the little early Tudor house and shop stood wringing his hands in the background, too agitated to render any practical help, a little group of friends and neighbours around. Most of the household goods had been rescued, but a good deal of the stock in the shop was badly damaged, whilst of course, the building was gutted and ruined.

"If only I'd bought that Kyl-fyre," he repeated again and again, but his friends looked at him wonderingly, thinking the trouble had turned his brain.

"What's Kyl-fyre?" asked one of the bystanders, thinking to humour him, and was amazed to learn that Kyl-fyre was no mythical personage after all, but the name of one of the most useful inventions of modern times.

"A friend of mine was describing a fire at Bath to me," he said, "and it was he who advised me to get one of these cylinders. But I put it off, and now it is too late."

"My friend told me that a fire broke out at a great drapery establishment at Bath," he explained. "They said the fire was caused by the fusing of an electric wire which melted

the gas pipe and ignited the gas. But the premises were fitted up with these Kyl-fyre cylinders, so that the fire was instantly put out."

"But what is Kyl-fyre?" asked the others.

"Kyl-fyre is a dry powder," he replied, "but its constituent parts are naturally the secret property of the inventors. The complete cylinder costs only 5s. and will remain effective, so I am told, for a number of years."

"Then do you mean to say," put in another friend, "that this Kyl-fyre you speak of is so wonderful as to put out flames?"

"Precisely," he said. "I regret with all my heart that I did not get it last week when I heard of its wonderful properties. This will teach me a bitter lesson, never to procrastinate in such a manner again."

"Then does Kyl-fyre do no harm?" asked someone near. "Being a chemical I should think it would, perhaps, damage delicate fabrics or furniture."

"No," he said, "even when it is thrown by accident upon the wrong place it is quite as harmless as French chalk. It contains no grit and no acids, and even if it falls on delicate machinery, rich fabrics, or furniture it does not injure them in the least. On the other hand, as soon as it comes in contact with heat such as is always the accompaniment of active fire, a very powerful gas is generated which overcomes the heat of the fire. This gas displaces the oxygen in the air, hence it instantly starves the flames, and speedily puts them out. The hotter the fire the more quickly is this effected. Marvellous to say, this gas is absolutely harmless where animal or human life is concerned, so there is no need to worry."

Think of what that means. Only those who have heard the cry of "Fire!" realise its grim horror, only those who have experienced its terrible depredations know what a fearsome enemy it is. Yet with Kyl-fyre in the home one may rest absolutely safe, and know that dangers manifold may be removed by its use.

Kyl-fyre is inexpensive, so that expense need be no deterrent; it is easily procurable from Kyl-fyre, Limited, Eastbourne; it weighs only 6 lbs., and is easily portable, whilst it is so readily worked that a timid woman need have no fear of being left alone in the house at night with the dread of an outbreak of fire haunting her dreams. With Kyl-fyre at hand everyone may rest secure.

In these days of stress and hurry one is sometimes tempted to procrastinate, but fire is such a common danger that Kyl-fyre should always be at hand.

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KYL-FYRE
THROW THE CONTENTS WITH FORCE INTO THE BASE OF THE FLAME NEVER SPRINKLE
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Have You Realised
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secures perfect safety against any outbreak. Kyl-Fyre is a dry powder contained in handsome cylindrical tubes. Immediately the fire is discovered the Extinguisher is snatched from the hook, thus releasing cap ; the contents are then dashed on to the flames, thereby creating a powerful but harmless gas which instantly extinguishes the fire. It can be used with great effect by woman or child. Guaranteed to remain effective for years.

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The Shopper's Note and Query Page

By MARY ODELL

A CORRESPONDENT who is evidently anxious to purchase an inexpensive billiard table as a Christmas gift for his family, writes to inquire whether tables, offered at prices varying from £3 10s. to £5 5s. are really satisfactory.

In reply, I quote from a letter recently received from Messrs. E. J. Riley, Ltd., Accrington. "We are especially busy with private orders for miniature tables, selling from £3 7s. 6d. upwards. The game played on these small tables is identical with that played on an elaborately fitted full-sized table, and it is easily possible to become an expert at billiards by practising on a table that has cost only sixty-seven and sixpence."

About a Raincoat

Another correspondent sends the following inquiry: "Could you tell me the name of a firm making a Raincoat that does not contain any rubber, and yet is actually guaranteed rainproof? I have tried several well-recommended makes of raincoats, but hitherto have always found that if it rains hard enough, and long enough, the wet gets through."—DIANA.

Answering DIANA's query to the best of my ability, I would refer her to the "Omne Tempus" Coat, manufactured by Messrs. Samuel Brothers, Ltd., of 65-67, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C. My own coat (made to measure, and costing £3 3s.) has no suggestion of rubber anywhere about it, but looks exactly like an ordinary good quality "covert" coat. The makers supplied a guarantee with it, that "If your 'Omne Tempus' fails to keep out the rain, we will take it back." I believe that no other firm except Messrs. Samuel issue an absolute and unqualified guarantee, applying without any restriction as to force of rain, the climate, or the date of purchase.

Delighting the Eyes

One never gets far with Christmas shopping before coming face to face with a bewitching array of confections, done up in all manner of tempting ways, and crying aloud for a kindly notice. Confronted with even a small selection of the Christmas gift specialties provided this year by Messrs. J. S. Fry and Sons, Ltd., and asked to describe some of them, one wonders how and where to begin.

The highest word of praise should, perhaps, be given to the exquisite King George V. box, one of the daintiest and most elegantly contrived chocolate cases that have ever been submitted to our appreciative criticism. The King George V. box is intended as a complement to the Alexandra box which was so very popular last year. It is filled with chocolates of the finest quality, and, being manufactured in sizes containing from half a pound of chocolates up to four pounds, will meet all possible requirements. Messrs. Fry also provide delightful little caskets of plaited wood, daintily lined and finished as handkerchief boxes. Glove boxes, of various sizes, most charmingly decorative, and filled with delicious confections, are to be purchased for five shillings, and there is also a very fascinating range of beautiful china, the teapots, etc., being filled with the dainty confections which render them trebly acceptable as Christmas gifts.

Rich Store of Snowy Linen

Other gifts equal in daintiness to those just mentioned, are offered by Messrs. Robinson and Cleaver, who for many years have issued a special Christmas list of handkerchief gifts, designed to meet the needs of the "fireside shopper."

The prices of this famous house are extremely reasonable, ladies' linen hemstitched handkerchiefs being obtainable at 2s. 11d., and gentlemen's linen hemstitched handkerchiefs at 5s. 3d. the dozen. For the little ones the nursery rhyme handkerchiefs, with an assortment of colours and rhymes to each dozen and costing but 1s. 11d., should prove an entertaining novelty.

Readers should certainly send for a list and samples. A postcard to Robinson and Cleaver, Ltd., 36 C, Donegall Place, Belfast, brings them free.

A Word to the Needlwoman

Many of us are old-fashioned enough to prefer to work our own embroidery, and news of a new silky lustre thread will be welcome. Every worker knows that it is advisable, when beginning any piece of work, to choose a special thread, and to "stick" it to right through. The reason is this: some makes of thread stand the washing and light, and retain their original brightness better than others, and to mix them is to emphasise the inferior thread after the first washing. For a really high-class thread to take the place of silk, Wildspur Embroidery Thread may be safely recommended. The manufacturers, Messrs. Copley, Marshall and Co., Ltd., Newmill, Huddersfield, issue a free booklet, "The Wildspur Way," on needlework. This may be obtained from fancy work dealers, or direct on request.

Lucky Charm Christmas Cards

Messrs. Raphael Tuck have taken timely advantage of the present-day rage for charms and mascots, and are providing a delightful series of these in connection with their newest greeting-cards. The dainty little mascots—lucky pigs, Swastika charms, horseshoes, purses, wishing-bones and such-like—are attached to specially designed cards by a silken ribbon, so that the mascot can be easily removed and worn on watch-chain or chatelaine.

The calendars issued by this famous house are, if anything, even more exquisite in design and finish than were those sent out last year, and the high-water mark of artistic beauty has again been touched by the various delightful productions in Christmas Auto stationery and parchment greeting cards. Scores of other new and charming ideas all serve as reminders that Christmas comes but once a year.

To Matrons in Particular

Messrs. Wood Bros., Ladies' Tailors and Maternity Outfitters, North Parade, Manchester, have an especially delightful Christmas list which will appeal to the inmates of every home where there is a baby. Messrs. Wood's latest skirt and costume catalogue (for 1911) is a charming little book that should be studied quietly by one's own fireside. It will be sent post free to anyone writing for it to the above address.

THE QUIVER

Baby's First Lessons

The brain of a child easily grasps that which is pleasing to ear and eye, and therein lies the value of the lilt and rhyme of our nursery stories, and the happy effect of the pictures illustrating them.

In choosing baby's first literature, always bear in mind that this will be the last thing to be forgotten. Happy pictures make happy youngsters. That is a fact well worth remembering.

The introduction of a handkerchief made specially for children, and forbidden to "grown-ups" to use even once, is heralded as a most important event by every child who has become the proud possessor of one of them. On these wonderful handkerchiefs are told and illustrated all the valiant and heroic deeds, all the really funny and realistic jests of nursery days. "Katchakyd" is the name of them, and the sympathetic grown-up smiles on the youngster who gazes at, and caresses, his "Katchakyd."

These "Katchakyd" handkerchiefs can be bought from drapers and stores, and are really beautifully designed. If any one of them should fade with ordinary washing, the makers undertake to replace it. They are packed in dainty boxes containing six, and cost only 1s. 11d. the half dozen.

For the Sweet Tooth

Messrs. Macfarlane, Lang & Co., the well-known biscuit makers, are again to the fore with many delightful dainties for Christmas, amongst which we would specially single out "Forfar Shortbread" and "Queen Mary Tea Cakes," both of which would be welcomed by ladies who love to have nice dainties for afternoon tea. The decorated tin of mixed biscuits in the form of a "Yule Log" is also quite unique.

Advice to Those About to Marry

Not so laconic as "Punch's" but quite as sensible. Couples setting up house in a small way, usually start with their carpets, hangings, and furniture all new; yet before many years are over things begin to show signs of serious dilapidation.

There are two reasons for this early deterioration: first, the tendency to buy a lot of cheap rubbish, rather than to start with a small amount of good furniture, and, second, the failure to realise that the good old adage about "a stitch in time," is nowhere more applicable than in household matters.

The wisest policy in regard to carpets is to keep them always on the move, turning round so as to equalise the wear.

Judicious renovation also greatly prolongs their term of service. Carpets cleaned by the dry process have the colours revived without risk of shrinking, or they can be dyed fast ingrained colours without obliterating the pattern.

When curtains require renovating it is wise to send them to a firm of repute, such as Campbell's, of Perth. Winter hangings can be dry-cleaned without the valances being unpicked or can be dyed when faded. Starched curtains cleaned by Campbell's gentle process, long outlive those bleached with crude chemicals. Messrs. P. and P. Campbell finish lace, muslin and net curtains with a smooth surface to ensure them keeping long clean, and do not over-stiffen them.

Window blinds calendered by the heavy machinery of this firm, retain their finish, and run evenly on the rollers.

Eiderdown quilts absorb so much of the exhalations from the body that they need regular and

thorough purifying. Such work is successfully carried out at "The Perth Dye Works." New coverings are put on if desired, and patterns of suitable fabrics may be selected at the firm's receiving offices. The firm's catalogue can be had post free, giving full list of prices and much practical advice as to the dry cleaning and dyeing of ladies' gents', and children's clothing.

Who Said Cats?

Yes, but *such* cats! Everybody who knows Louis Wain's delightful creations will welcome more pussies from the pen of this clever artist, and the adventures of Purkyns, Kittums, Kitty-Winks and all the rest of Cat Land are graphically described in verse in a dainty little booklet which every child will prize. All that boys and girls need do to get this present is to ask mother to send a penny stamp for postage to the Proprietors, Wright's Coal Tar Soap, 48, Southwark Street, S.E., and by return of post this lovely little book will reach them. But this is not all. The Proprietors of Wright's Coal Tar Soap have some amusing coloured postcards describing the adventures of a little Chinese boy who was caught by a naughty mandarin, Wan-tang-Fee. What he did to him, and how the wee boy escaped, are secrets I will not reveal, but if a request is made for these postcards they will be included with the book of verses.

A Way to Brighten Things

When a man, who for thirty years has refused to give any testimonial for goods used, voluntarily offers a communication setting forth the praises of some article, one may assume that such an article *merits* praise. This is precisely what happened touching "Ardenbrite," the King of Gold Paint. Applied, in this particular instance twelve years ago, the writer says: "It is as sound, and almost as bright, as when first done." Artists, house decorators, and housewives will find this Liquid Gold paint perfectly safe to use, having no explosive benzoline in its manufacture. Full directions are given with each bottle. It is sold in varying sizes at 6d., 1s., 1s. 6d. and 2s. 6d. each, and may be obtained from Messrs. Thomas Pavitt and Sons, 69, Southampton Row, London, W.C., or of artists' colourmen all over the kingdom.

A Brightener of a Different Sort—but not a Rival

Of the many preparations that are on the market for cleansing purposes, there is none that has such general uses as Panshine. This patent powder possesses remarkable properties for cleaning everything in and about the house, except clothes and silver. It contains nothing that is at all gritty or liable to scratch metalwork or paint. It is equally useful for scrubbing tables, washing paint, pots, brasses, and cleaning knives. A little Panshine sprinkled on a damp cloth will save a tremendous amount of hard work in the house, and it contains nothing that is in any way injurious to the skin. Packed in patent dredges which prevent waste, it represents a distinct economy amongst household cleansers. It is now stocked by the leading grocers and oilmen everywhere, but should any difficulty be experienced in obtaining it, if our readers will send a 1d. stamp to H. D. Pochin and Co., Salford, Manchester, they will, by return, receive a sample, together with booklet "Kitchen Magic," which fully explains the many different uses of Panshine.

THE QUIVER

Little Drop that Effect Great Cures

In all cases of Fever, Inflammatory or Neuralgic affections, in Sleeplessness, in Spasmodic Diseases, Coughs, Colds, Bronchitis, Asthma, Influenza, Gout, Rheumatism, and kindred ailments, Freeman's Chlorodyne swiftly brings relief, and, if taken in time, will effect a lasting cure.

Its wonderful healing and soothing powers have received the hearty endorsement of the medical profession, and it is in regular use in many of the best-known hospitals of the world. In India, and in tropical countries where Malaria, Cholera, and other miasmatic diseases prevail, Freeman's Chlorodyne has become a household necessity, and is used both by European and native alike, as a preventive and a remedy.

Mouth Hygiene

The neglect of the teeth is largely responsible for general ill-health, because decayed teeth afford a lodging to disease germs which are sooner or later carried into the system. Nor is the mere brushing of the teeth sufficient to clean them. Some thoroughly reliable dentifrice must be used. In choosing a dentifrice, care should be taken to avoid acid powders or paste, or any powders that contain grit or hard substances liable to damage the delicate enamel. Of the many on the market, Sozodont will be found not only safe and reliable, but exceptionally pleasant to use. It contains antiseptics of the highest grade that do not damage the tissues of the mouth and gums, yet effectively and hygienically cleanse the teeth and mouth and prevent decay. Sozodont may be had in liquid, powder, or paste. The makers recommend the use of the powder in conjunction with the liquid. Those who have not already tried Sozodont should send penny stamp and name and address of Chemist to Hall and Ruckel, 111, Corporation Street, Manchester, who will gladly send free trial sample. Sozodont may be obtained from chemists everywhere.

Extra Pin Money

"Extra Pin Money" is a term which has been made familiar through consistent publicity given it by that well-known firm of Goldsmiths, Messrs. Allen and Daws, London Street, Norwich, and it is not surprising to learn that many ladies, in turning over their old trinkets, long since discarded, find it convenient to send them to a firm of repute. Messrs. Allen and Daws, who have been established over half a century, daily receive a large number of parcels of old gold and silver, precious stones, etc., and by return of post they send their clients cash, or an offer for the articles received.

Another Form of Investment

Who, at this time of the year, has not already made at least one "good resolution" for 1911? One of the most popular, by the way, is the determination to commence making provision for a rainy day, and those imbued with this praiseworthy resolve will find the system propounded by Mr. Albert Ranson, of Norwich, of more than passing interest. That gentleman, who has established a reputation throughout the Eastern Counties as an Insurance expert, points the way to "invest small savings, without anxiety," as he tersely puts it. Thus, a lady or gentleman, with equal facility, whose age, say, is 30 next birthday, can put aside £20 a year, and this will secure, at the age of 60, a pension for the remainder of life of £85 4s., or cash £1,026. There is no trying ordeal of a medical examination,

and the policies are issued and guaranteed by a Life Office which has invested funds of over TEN MILLIONS. Larger or smaller "savings" produce, of course, proportionate results. Mr. Ranson should have a large clientele.

A City Beautiful

Kingsway will soon be one of the show places of the Metropolis—a street of handsome buildings, and a thoroughfare so wide that you will wonder if you are in a new London. And so you are, for here a new business centre has sprung up where modern business men can cope with the demands of business in modern business buildings. As we write, another new structure is rapidly nearing completion. It is to be the London home of the "Koh-i-noor" Pencil and Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pen—two products whose fame is only bounded by civilisation itself. The building is appropriately named "Koh-i-noor House," and its erection has been necessitated by the constant expansion of trade in the goods mentioned. The work has been carried out by Mr. James Carmichael of Wandsworth, from the design of Messrs. J. S. Gibson, Skipworth and Gordon, Architects, of 5, Old Bond Street, W. The carving is by Mr. Gilbert Searle. Messrs. L. and C. Hardtmuth, the world-renowned Pencil manufacturers, are to be congratulated upon having secured such an excellent site, and on the palatial building soon to be occupied.

An Interesting Book

An extremely interesting book has recently been issued by the Daimler Motor Co., describing a visit made by the late Prince Francis of Teck and Prince Henry of Prussia to the famous Daimler Motor Works at Coventry in leafy Warwickshire.

This work is full of anecdotes of the visit, and is beautifully printed on art paper, and tastefully decorated with photographs of the royal visitors.

The famous visit took place on February 22nd, 1910, and this record of the journey from London to Coventry, of the inspection of the works, and the race, against time, back to London, is entralling.

Not alone this, but the photographs taken of the late Prince Francis of Teck and Prince Henry of Prussia are very faithful likenesses.

From an instructive point of view this book is of great utility, as it shows all the forms and processes used by the Daimler Motor Car Co. in the production of those cars for which they are famed.

Prince Francis of Teck was very fond of visiting the Daimler Works, and in the July prior to this recorded visit he was at the Daimler Works on the occasion of the Warwickshire Meeting of the Royal Automobile and Associated Clubs.

To the Lover of Animals

Most of our readers would confess to a love for animals, and would admit that they take a keen interest in any suggestion which makes for the comfort and welfare of domestic pets. It will be immediately granted that one of the greatest essentials is to keep all pets in a cleanly condition, and free from the obnoxious vermin which are prone to afflict them. We have been strongly impressed with the efficiency of Kerol, the well-known disinfectant, and are assured on the highest authority that its use is really indispensable. Dogs and their kennels are alike benefited when a few drops of Kerol are added to the cleansing water, and if cages, hutches, poultry-houses, and the like, are similarly treated, all vermin are destroyed.

A Matter of Congratulation

by a
TEN
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One of our readers, Mrs. Barras, of Westbourne, Bellahouston, Glasgow, has been awarded the Gold Medal and Diploma at the Ideal Home Exhibition, Glasgow, for a most artistic dress panel, worked entirely with the beautiful and popular Ososilkie Brightest Lustre Yarn.

A Treat for the Children

Some little time ago Messrs. Joseph Watson and Sons, Ltd., the well-known soap manufacturers, distributed gratuitously to children thousands of copies of a most ingenious and interesting book, entitled "Pets and Hobbies," and offered 1,200 prizes to boys and girls who entered the painting competition connected therewith. A second competition has now been arranged. Once again, the "Pets and Hobbies" book is being distributed north, south, east, and west, and once again embryonic R.A.'s are engaged in drawing and colouring pictures for another grand award of twelve hundred prizes. A first-rate occupation too, now the wet and chilly days are here, driving the little ones indoors; and a home education of a very delightful kind, to say nothing of the capital prizes to be won.

Mothers should secure one or more copies of Watson's "Pets and Hobbies" book for the youngsters without another day's delay, before the edition is exhausted. One copy of the "Pets and Hobbies" book is sent free and postage paid in exchange for either three wrappers from Watson's "Nubolic" Disinfectant Soap, or six from Watson's "Sparkle" Scouring Soap. Application should be sent to Joseph Watson and Sons, Ltd., Whitehall Soap Works, Leeds.

Personal Cleanliness

The maintenance of the teeth and mouth in a sound condition is of the first importance in the ensuring of good health and a pleasing appearance. To bring this about satisfactorily, there are several things which must be done, and of these the first is a liberal use of the tooth-brush, which must be just sufficiently hard not to hurt the user's gums, and it should be charged with a slightly alkaline antiseptic substance which can be forced into all the interstices of the teeth. To wash the mouth with a fluid does not attain the end in view, because the decompositions upon the teeth can only be removed by scrubbing. Then the material used should not be so hard as to scratch the enamel, and the antiseptics should not be so caustic as to leave the so-called "clean taste" in the mouth, which is really brought about by a deadening of the delicate nerves in the mouth tissues. A good preparation for cleansing the mouth should be slightly alkaline so as to neutralise the acid matters formed by decomposing food particles; it should permit of a polish being put upon the teeth without scratching the enamel; it should contain antiseptic ingredients which will destroy the obnoxious organisms in the mouth, without at the same time detrimentally affecting the delicate nerves of taste.

Jewsbury and Brown's Oriental Tooth Paste fulfils all these requirements perfectly. It is the result of the continued experience and study of almost a century, and fully conforms to all the most exacting demands of modern science. It is obtain-

able of all good chemists in 1s. tubes and 1s. 6d. and 2s. 6d. pots.

The Always Welcome Gift

Foremost amongst acceptable gifts will be the very dainty gloves and footwear sent out by the Jason Hosiery Company, Leicester, a firm so well known for the real excellence of its several manufactures that praise of Jason stockings, socks, or knitted gloves is superfluous. What may be mentioned with advantage is the very tasteful way in which Jason goods are packed, each separate mail order—of two or three pairs of gloves, socks, or stockings—being sent out in its own dainty little box. The prices, too, are consistently reasonable; for most delightful little "sets" of gloves, socks, or stockings can be purchased for 4s. or 5s., and these will be forwarded by return post to the desired address. Price lists of Jason hosiery are appearing in our advertisement pages.

For Auld Lang Syne

To how many thousands of folks—north, south, east, west—does the word "Christmas" suggest—not so much plum-pudding and mince pies as just simply—Shortbread. Yet even shortbread is no longer the conservative dainty it was ten years ago, but has taken to itself many new and delightful forms and fancies. Messrs. Crawford, the famous biscuit and cake manufacturers, have seven special varieties of delicious shortbread, named in their Christmas list. The Mistletoe and the Balmoral Shortbread are among the daintiest of these tempting confections.

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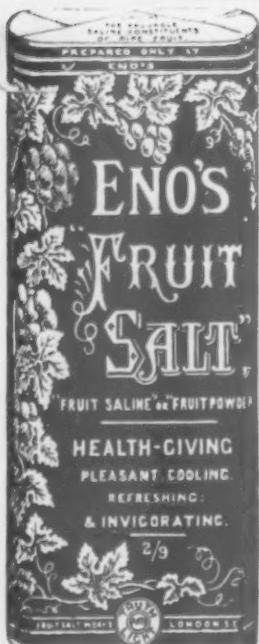
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